Luther's Prayers

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LUTHER'S PRAYERS

Translated from the Original and
Conveniently Indexed for Ready Use

AS

A Manual of Prayer at all Times and a Companion Book to the Small Catechism

By
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With Introduction by
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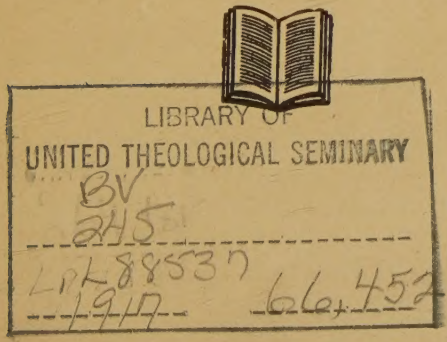

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INTRODUCTION.

Luther lived in continuous communion with God. His incessant petition is at once the secret and the testimony of his spiritual strength. All that he said and did, all that he taught and wrought, came forth from his inner life of prayer.

The Church four hundred years after Luther, in the midst of many external movements, needs nothing so sorely as Luther's spirit and practice of prayer; and in this book it will find Luther beseeching the Lord in living English. The editor and translator has opened to us the heart and soul of the living Luther.

May this labor of love be blessed with abundant fruit in the great communion that lives by faith in the Lord Jesus, and not by works.

THEODORE E. SCHMAUK,
President of the General Council.
Chairman of the Quadri-Centennial Committee.

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PREFACE.

In 1522, six years after Luther began, and seven years before he completed, the Small Catechism, he enlarged his catechetical work into his **Betbuechlein** which up to the time of his death appeared in many changed editions.

Antonius Otto, Pastor in Nordhausen, and a student under Justus Jonas, Luther's close friend, published at Eisleben in 1565 a new edition of Luther's Prayers. In his preface he wrote: This booklet actually contains the principal doctrines of Luther, and shows how a poor sinner, in life and in death, can truly grasp and hold salvation by faith in Christ, so that nothing, not even the law of God, can confuse him, nor take it from him.

Again in 1568 Peter Trewer gathered from all the writings of Luther the prayers with which he so richly seasoned them, and arranged them in proper order. He did this to enable all devout Christians to find the comfort that the praying of Luther's Prayers would bring them. In his introduction to this edition, Piscator says that these prayers are spiritually rich, vigorous, earnest and ardent.

On the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth, in 1883, the Calwer Publication Society of Stuttgart printed and widely distributed the book. A copy of this edition was presented to the translator by Dr. Wackernagel, in 1895, as a commencement gift. From this

copy the translation has been made. Reference is made in the preface of this work to the childlike humility and simplicity, and the confidence and certainty of final triumph in which Luther continually pleads with his dear Lord. Here the enemies of Luther are challenged to compile a prayerbook from their writings.

Luther was a great man and accomplished much because he was a man of prayer. He laid hold on God, and drew his power directly from Him. That the prayers of this man of God are still in our possession, and may become our prayers by entering into them with the same childlike spirit, ought to be one of the principal sources of rejoicing during the Quadri-Centennial of the Reformation.

The reason that this book is not more generally known and used is not because of its contents, for it contains a variety of heart-gripping and soul-lifting prayers that no other volume of its size can equal. But heretofore no arrangement has been made whereby the prayers that were desired could be readily found. The translator believes that this difficulty has been overcome by the simple index in this book, where the wants for which the soul seeks utterance may quickly find the words that will bear them to the throne of Grace.

May this little volume go forth to become a pocket and heart companion to multitudes of God's people, to help them over many hard places in this world, to guard them from yielding to evil influences, and to keep them close to Him who is here recognized as Friend and Brother, our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

CHARLES E. KISTLER.

Reading, Pa., Jan. 1, 1917.

LUTHER'S PRAYERS.

I.

PREPARATION FOR PRAYER.

Prayer Does Not Permit Sin to Interfere.

1.

For the Removal of Hindrances to Prayer

Lord, because it is Thy will and command that we should come to Thee and pray, I now come to satisfy Thy desire. I beseech Thee to forgive and remove my sins which press heavily upon me. Let them not prevent me from coming to Thee in prayer. Amen.

Prayer Does Not Look Upon One's Own Unworthiness.

2.

For Help to Overcome the Sense of Unworthiness

Lord, it is Thine honor, and service to Thee, through which Thou art praised and glorified, that I beg of Thee. Therefore, dear Lord, consider not that I am unworthy, but in need of Thy help. It is with Thy glory in view that I, an undeserving person and a poor sinner, entreat Thee. I cannot be without Thy help, and Thou art willing and able to grant it to them that ask Thee for it. Then look upon

my need and misery, and help me for Thine honor's sake. Amen.

3.

Praise for Christ's Condescending Love

O gracious God, I am fully aware that I am unworthy, and deserve to be a brother of the devil, and not of Christ. But because Christ, Thy dear Son, declared that I, for whom He died and rose, am His brother, and earnestly desires that I should believe Him, without doubt and fear, I need no longer regard myself as unworthy and full of sin. For this I love and thank Him from the heart. Praise be to the faithful Saviour that He is so gracious and merciful with Thee and the Holy Ghost in eternity. Amen.

4.

Thanksgiving for Divine Honors Bestowed on the Soul

Dear God, how shall I, a poor and offensive creature, come to such great honor as to esteem my soul the bride of God, and the Son of God its bridegroom? That the eternal Majesty has condescended to come into my poor flesh and blood, and actually united Himself with me so as to be one in body with me, is an honor not even bestowed on the angels in heaven. If from head to foot I am altogether full of pollution, corruption, leprosy, sin, and offense before God, how can I be considered His beloved, and one in body with the high, eternal, and glorious Majesty? Since Thou wilt have it thus, let there be praise and thanksgiving to Thee in eternity. Amen.

Let Not the Thought of Election Hinder You.

5.

For Removal of Fears from Thougths of Election

Whoever I may be, I am not troubled about it. Though I am wicked and sinful, I know that on this account my Lord is not so, but remains righteous and gracious. The more sinful and wicked I am, the less can I rely on anything else, and the more fervently will I implore Him. Now I have no time to argue whether I am elected or not. But I feel the need of Thy help, and therefore I come and seek it in all humility. Amen.

6.

Relying Solely on Christ

Dear God, the Canaanite woman was not chosen, for she was a heathen. Since she did not permit this to hinder her prayer, I will also pray. I need help and must have this and that. Where else would I seek and find it but with Thee through Thy Son, my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer Is Founded On God's Command.

7.

Obeying the Command and Trusting the Promise

Lord, Thou knowest that I do not presume to come before Thee of myself nor on account of my worthiness. Were I to rely on this I could not lift up mine eyes unto Thee, and would not know how to begin to pray. But I come because Thou Thyself hast commanded and dost earnestly request that we should call upon Thee, and

hast promised to hear us. Thou hast also sent Thine only Son Who has taught us what we shall pray, and has even spoken the words we shall say. Hence I know that this prayer is pleasing to Thee. However great my boldness to consider myself a child of God in Thy presence may seem to be, I must yield to Thee, for Thou wilt have it thus. I would not accuse Thee of falsehood, and thus adding to my sins, offend Thee still more by despising Thy command and doubting Thy promise. Amen.

8.

For Greater Faith and Diligence in Prayer

Dear God, would that we were as diligent to pray, at least with longings in the heart, as Thou art in attracting, bidding, commanding, assuring, and constraining us to prayer. Alas, we are too slothful and ungrateful! Forgive us, dear God, and strengthen our faith. Since I cannot pay the penalty, and my name is not sufficient, let satisfaction be made in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer Relies on the Promise.

9.

For Redemption

O God, Creator of heaven and earth, Thou hast sent Thine only Son Jesus Christ into the world. For me He was crucified, dead, and buried, and rose again on the third day. He ascended to heaven that He should sit at Thy right hand to rule all things. He sent His Spirit that we should await His

coming to judge both the quick and the dead, and with Him come to the eternal kingdom, our heritage which Thou wilt give us through Him. To this end, O Lord God, Thou hast instituted and given to us baptism and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, Thy Son. For us Thou hast united Christ with these sacraments. In them, Thou dost reveal Thyself, and dost command us to accept Thee. Hemmed in by Satan, we are grievously tormented by sin, and constantly surrounded by death. Dear Son of God, Jesus Christ, Thou didst come upon earth to destroy the works of the devil. Thou hast abolished death and hast brought life and immortality to light. Give us again Thy work which is righteous and life-giving. Help us to withstand the works of the devil with which he would cast us from life into death. O Christ Who hast overcome the devil, help me also to overcome him, and forsake me not. Amen.

Prayer Depends Only on Christ, the Mediator.

10. *Dependence on Christ Alone*

O heavenly Father, Who hast created all things, Thou hast brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, across the wilderness, and over the Jordan. All this avails naught for me. What is it to me that Thou hast done great

wonders to Noah, and hast enabled Peter to walk on the sea, and commanded the leper to show himself to the priest? But it is of importance to me to call upon Thee and hold fast to Thee by the word and assurance: Lord, Thou hast redeemed me through the blood of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. This word concerns me, for it penetrates heaven, and with it I surely touch Thee. To it Thou hast bound Thyself that I should find Thee and cling to Thee. Hear Thou me! Although neither I nor any angel can stand before Thy Majesty, I still have Christ Whom Thou canst not hate. I depend on Him and on Thy assurance that Thou wilt receive me through Him. Thou must reject Him before Thou wilt reject me. Amen.

11.

As Brother of Christ and Child of God

Lord God, heavenly Father, I consider myself a dear child of Thine, and Thee my beloved Father, not because I deserve it, nor ever could merit it, but because my dear Lord, Thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ, would be my brother and of His own accord offers and makes this blessing known to me. Since I may consider myself His brother and He regards me as such, Thou wilt permit me to become and remain a child of Thine, forever. Amen.

12.

Assurance of Holiness Through Christ

O Lord, even though I were John the Baptist, I could not endure to give Thee an account of my life and deeds. I deem myself devout and a servant of Thine, not on account of my own life and work, but because Thou hast promised to be, and continually art, merciful to me through Jesus Christ. If I am unholy, He is holy; if I am not a servant of God, He is God's servant; if I have cares and fears, He is free from all cares and fears. Therefore, I will leap out of myself into Him, and rejoice that in and through Him, I am holy. Lord God, I am sure that I am holy in Thy sight, and a servant of Thine, not through myself who feel the guilt of my sin, but through Christ Who has pardoned my sin, and has made satisfaction for me. To Thee be praise in eternity. Amen.

Prayer Is Made in the Name of Jesus Christ.

13.

Accepted Only Through the Merits of Christ

Dear Lord and Father, I know beyond a doubt that Thou dost love me, for I love Thy Son, my Redeemer Jesus Christ. In this trust and confidence, I cheerfully ask Thee to hear me and grant my request. I know that Thou wilt gladly grant me all things, not because I am holy and devout, but through the merits of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. In His name I now come before Thee and ask without doubting

in the least that my prayer will assuredly be answered, no matter who I may be. Amen.

14.

Praise to God for the Removal of All Evil

O Lord I am not worthy to have a glimpse of heaven, and unable with my works to redeem myself from sin, death, the devil and hell. Nevertheless, Thou hast given me Thy Son, Jesus Christ, Who is far more precious and dearer than heaven, and much stronger than sin, death, the devil and hell. For this, I rejoice, praise and thank Thee, O God, that without price and out of pure grace Thou hast granted me this boundless blessing in Thy dear Son through Whom Thou takest sin, death and hell from me, and dost grant to me all that belongs to Him. Amen.

Short and Fervent Petitions.

15.

For Help in the Time of Need

Dear God, in the midst of anguish and need, I am in great distress. This brother of mine has his trials which the devil increases. Time will not permit to reflect whether I am godly and worthy. Help me now in this time of need, according to Thy word. Amen.

16.

For Destruction of the Devil's Kingdom

O dear God, Thou art my Father; of Thee I may boldly ask all things, for Thou canst not withhold anything from me. My heart assures me that what I ask shall be granted. I now pray that Thy Name and word shall be hallowed by us. On the other hand I pray Thee

to destroy the kingdom of the devil with all its wickedness, and whatever is contrary to Thy word and will. Amen.

17.

For Relief from Misery

Lord, misery and misfortune annoy and oppress me. I long to be relieved of them. Thou hast said, Ask and ye shall receive. Accordingly I come and ask. Amen.

Prayer Expects To Be Heard and Answered.

18.

For an Answer to the Cry of the Helpless

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, my longing is so great that I cannot express it in words. I know not how to ask. Thou seest my heart. What more shall I say? My suffering is greater than my complaint can be. I cannot counsel myself with my reason, nor comfort myself with my own courage. Comfortless, helpless and forsaken, I am altogether undone. My God, Thou wilt not leave my hope. Thou wilt hear my prayer and satisfy my longings. It is for me to pray and await Thy grace. It is Thine to hear me and to fulfill my hope. Amen.

a. Let him who doubts he is heard of God remove his doubts, and come unconfused to God in prayer. For God cannot and will not endure that we doubt Him. He will not permit Himself to be classed and censured with the unfaithful and deceivers. He who doubts might as well say: Lord, I do not believe, and how can I know whether it is true when Thou sayest, Verily, verily, I say unto you, What ye shall ask in my name, I will do. And he will treat other passages of Scripture likewise. Therefore, when you pray, kneel or stand confidently, believing your prayer will be answered, while you sincerely acknowledge yourself to be a sinner, and resolve to lead a better life.

b. We are also sufficiently taught not to tempt God in prayer. It is not for us to determine the time, measure, aim, manner, or person, and how, when, where, or through what means, He must grant our requests. All this we must humbly leave to Him, believing that He will rightly answer every petition according to His divine and infinite wisdom. Even if it seems otherwise, we shall not doubt that the prayer was indeed heard. When the angel Gabriel said to Daniel, Chapter 9, At the beginning of Thy supplications the commandment came forth, etc., he was given far more than he had prayed for. Everyone shall consider himself equally privileged to call upon God in trials of his own or others.

Prayer Continues to Ask, Seek, and Knock.

19.

For Assurance of Being Heard.

Lord God, heavenly Father, I ask and would be assured that my petitions shall and must be nothing less than yea and amen. Otherwise I will not pray nor have intercession made for me. Not that I am righteous or worthy, for I know very well and confess that I am unworthy. I have earned Thine eternal wrath and hell fire with my great and many sins. But in this that Thou dost command and constrain me to pray in the Name of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, I am still somewhat obedient. Upon this challenge and consolation of Thine infinite goodness, not on account of my own righteousness, do I kneel or stand before Thee, and pray what is upon my heart concerning those who are in need of Thy help. If Thou dost not help us, O Lord, Thou wilt offend and dishonor Thy Name. Thou wilt surely spare Thyself, lest the world would say Thou wert an ungra-

cious and dreadful God. Preserve us from such a misfortune. Remember, dear heavenly Father, how Thou hast at all times supported and helped Thy people. I will not cease to knock but will continue to cry aloud and to plead to the end of my life. Amen.

Prayer Is Regulated According to the Words Which Christ Himself Has Taught Us.

20.

For the Father's Grace and Mercy.

O God, Father in heaven, Thou wilt look in mercy upon Thy needy children, and wilt grant us grace:

21.

That His Name be Hallowed.

1. That Thy holy Name may be hallowed by us throughout the world by the pure and sincere teaching of Thy word, and the fervent love of our life. Graciously turn aside every false doctrine and all sinful living in which Thy worthy Name is blasphemed and profaned.

22.

For the Coming of His Kingdom.

2. In order that Thy kingdom may come and increase, bring all blinded sinners and those who are held captive by the devil in his kingdom, to the knowledge of true faith in Jesus Christ, and make the number of souls in Christendom great.

23.

For Submission to His Will.

3. Grant that we may be strengthened by Thy Spirit to do and suffer Thy will both in life and in death, and in good and evil days break, sacrifice and mortify our own will.

24. *For Temporal Blessings.*

4. Give us also our daily bread, and guard us against avarice and anxiety for the body, that we may confidently rely on Thee for all blessings.

25. *For Pardon.*

5. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors that we may have a clear and joyful conscience before Thee, and that we may never again fear, nor be frightened by sin.

26. *For Help to Overcome the Devil.*

6. Lead us not into temptation, but help us by Thy Spirit to subdue the flesh, to despise the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his malice.

27. *For Deliverance From All Evil*

7. Finally deliver us from all bodily and spiritual evil in time and eternity. Amen.

a. I believe without doubt that my prayer is heard and accepted in heaven, because Christ assures us: What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them.

b. Use also three devotional psalms, (25, 51, 85); Three comforting psalms, (23, 84, 91); Four psalms of thanksgiving, (103, 118, 139, 111); and pray chapter 12 of Isaiah.

II.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

A Talk of the Soul With God (1519).

28.

Seeking the Father

Our Father, Who art in heaven, how shall we, Thy children on earth, who are separated from Thee by misery like a great wall standing between us, ever come to Thee in our fatherland?

A child honors his father, and a servant his master. Am I your Father, where is My honor? Am I your Lord, where are the fear and reverence due to Me? Mal. 4:6. For My holy Name is blasphemed and dishonored by and amongst you. Is. 52:5.

29.

For God's Glory in All Things

Alas, this is true! O Father we acknowledge our guilt. Be Thou a gracious Father and do not call us to account, but grant us Thy grace so to live that Thy holy Name may be hallowed in us. Let us in no wise think, speak, do, have, or attempt anything, unless Thy praise and honor are included, so that above all things we may seek Thy glory and not our own vainglory. Grant that as children we may love, fear and honor Thee as Father.

How can My honor and Name be hallowed by you, when all your hearts and thoughts are inclined to evil and bound in sin, Gen. 8:21, and none can sing My praise in a strange land? Ps. 137:4.

30.

For God's Reign Within Us

O Father, this also is unfortunately true, we feel that our bodies are inclined to sin, and that the world, the flesh, and the devil would reign in us, and thus cast out Thine honor and Name. Therefore, we beseech Thee to help us out of our misery. Let Thy kingdom come that sin may be expelled, and that we may live holy and acceptable lives in Thy sight, and that Thou alone mayest reign within us, so that in obedience with all our inner and outer powers we shall be subject to Thee.

I will spoil whom I shall help, and whom I shall make alive, blessed, rich, and devout, I will mortify, cast aside, make poor, and destroy. But ye will not endure such counsels and deeds of Mine. Ps. 78:10, 11. How then shall I help you, and what more shall I do to you?

31.

That God's Will, Not Ours, be Done

We are grieved that we fail to understand and suffer Thy salutary help. O Father give us grace, and help us to let Thy will be done in us. Even if it hurts us, do Thou continue to reprove, sting, smite, burn, and whatever Thou wilt, that Thy will and not ours be done. Defend us, dear Father, and let us not undertake nor do anything after our own conceit, intention and volition. Our will opposes Thine. Thine alone is good, even if it does not seem so to us. Ours is evil, although it may appear to be good.

Indeed more has been done than to love Me with the lips and to keep the heart from Me. But when I undertook to improve them,

they turned back and escaped in the midst of My effort, Ps. 78:9. They who began well, and moved Me to deal with them, have turned away from Me, and fallen again into sin to dishonor Me.

32.

For Bodily and Spiritual Nourishment

O Father, it is indeed true that no one can be strong in his own powers, I Sam. 2:4. Who can stand before Thy might, if Thou Thyself dost not strengthen and comfort us? Therefore, dear Father, embrace us, accomplish Thy will in us, that we may become Thy kingdom to Thy praise and glory. But, dear Father, strengthen us in this transaction with Thy holy word, give us our daily bread, establish in our hearts Thy dear Son Jesus Christ Who is the true bread of heaven, that being sustained by Him, we may gladly bear and suffer the breaking and mortifying of our own will, and the fulfillment of Thine. Give grace to all Christendom. Send us educated pastors and preachers who will not give us the dregs and chaff of foolish fables, but teach us Thy holy Gospel and lead us to Jesus Christ.

It is not meet to cast the children's bread and that which is holy to the dogs, Matt. 7:6, 15:26. You sin daily, and if I have My word preached to you day and night, you will not hear nor obey, but despise it.

33.

For Forgiveness as We Forgive

O Lord, let this move Thee to pity, and do not on this account deny us our daily bread. We are sorry that we do not meet the requirements of Thy holy word, and pray Thee to be patient with us Thy poor children, to forgive us

our debts, and not to enter into judgment with us, for in Thy sight can no one be justified. Remember Thy promise that if we gladly forgive our debtors, Thou dost assure us of forgiveness, not that through such forgiveness on our part we are worthy of Thy forgiveness, but because Thou art true and hast graciously promised pardon to all who forgive their fellowmen. We rely on Thy promise.

Very often I pardon and release you, but you will not remain steadfast, Ps. 78:8. You are of weak faith. You cannot watch and wait with Me a little while, for you soon enter again into temptation. Matt. 26:41.

34.

For Help to Resist Temptation

We are weak and sick, O Father, and the temptations of the flesh and the world are great and many. O Father, keep us, and let us not fall again into temptation and sin, but give us grace that we may remain steadfast, and fight bravely to our end, for without Thy grace and help we can do nothing.

I am righteous and My judgment is true, therefore, sin cannot remain unpunished, Ps. 11:8. Thus you must bear evil to be tempted thereby. It is the guilt of your sin that constrains Me to forbid and punish it.

35.

For Deliverance From All Evil

Since evil places temptation in our way, and brings us in conflict with sin, dear Father, deliver us from it, so that redeemed from all sin and evil according to Thy will, we may belong to Thy kingdom to praise, honor and hallow Thee forever. Amen.

36.

Assurance of Being Heard

As Thou hast taught and commanded us to pray in this manner, and hast promised to hear us, we hope and are assured, O dearest Father, that for the sake of Thy truth, Thou wilt graciously and mercifully grant us all these requests. Amen.

Finally, some one will say: What if I could not believe that my prayers are heard? Then do like the father whose son had a dumb spirit, Mark 9:13, when Christ said to him, if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And immediately the father of the child cried out, and weeping, said, (v. 24) Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.

37.

Trusting God

O God and Father, I do not doubt that the things for which I prayed are assured, not because I prayed for them, but because Thou hast commanded me to pray, and hast certainly promised to grant them. I am sure that Thou, God, art true and canst not deceive, and thus not the worthiness of my prayer, but the certainty of Thy truth makes me firmly believe without doubt that it shall be and remain yea and amen.

ANOTHER FORM FOR PRAYING THE LORD'S PRAYER (1520).

Our Father who art in heaven.

38.

For the Abiding Joy of Deeming God Our Father

O Almighty God, since Thou through Thine infinite mercy hast not only permitted, but hast also taught and commanded us to pray through Thine only beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whose merits and mediation we shall call Thee Father, although we have provoked Thee to

wrath, and according to all righteousness Thou mightest be a severe judge on account of our sins which we have so grievously and abundantly committed against Thee, pour into our hearts for Thy mercy's sake the comforting assurance of Thy fatherly love. Enable us to get the best taste of the sweetness of filial safety, that we may with joy deem and name Thee Father, know and love Thee as such, and call upon Thee in all our needs. Guard us that we may remain Thy children, and not commit an offence whereby we might prove ourselves enemies of Thine, and thus make a dreadful judge of Thee, our most precious Father. Amen.

39.

For a United and Brotherly Love

It is also Thy will that we should not only as individuals name Thee Father, but that in common we should also call Thee "Our Father," and with one accord pray for all. Wherefore, give us a united and brotherly love that we may know and consider all as brothers and sisters, and entreat Thee our common, beloved Father, for each and all, as one child speaks for another to its father.

40.

For Ability to Call God "Our Father"

Let no one amongst us seek his own or forget others before Thee, but having cast off all hatred, envy and discord, let us love one another as true and devout children of God, that we may with one accord say, not "My Father," but "Our Father."

41.

For Trust in the Heavenly Father

Since Thou art not a father of the flesh here upon earth, but a spiritual Father in heaven, and art not mortal nor uncertain, nor unable to help Thyself like an earthly bodily father, Thou dost convince us that Thou art infinitely better than an earthly father, and thus Thou teachest us to despise temporal parentage, native land, friends, property, flesh and blood, in comparison with Thee.

42.

For Grace to be Heavenly Children

O Father, grant us also that we may be Thy heavenly children. Teach us to be mindful only of our souls and our heavenly heritage, so that our earthly country and inheritance may not deceive, nor limit, nor hinder us, neither make us mere children of this world, that we may in reality call Thee "Our heavenly Father," and truly be Thy heavenly children.

Hallowed be Thy name.

43.

Against Profaning God's Name

O Almighty God, dear heavenly Father, in this miserable vale of tears, Thy Name is so frequently profaned, blasphemed and reviled; it is attributed to many things void of Thine honor, and taken in vain in many ways for sinful purposes, so that this harmful life is indeed a disgrace and a dishonor to Thy holy Name. Therefore, grant us Thy grace that we may guard ourselves against all that does not redound to the honor and praise of Thy holy Name.

Help us to abolish all sorcery and deceitful blessings. Grant that all conjuring in Thy Name by men and the devil may cease. Assist us to uproot every false belief and superstition. Bring to naught all heresy and erroneous teaching presented in the guise of Thy Name. Grant that all false pretences at truth, devoutness, and holiness, may deceive no one.

44.

For Help to Glorify God Alone

Help that no one may perjure, lie, or deceive by Thy Name. Preserve us from every false comfort fabricated under cover of Thy Name. Guard us against all spiritual pride and vanity of temporal glory or distinction. Help us in all our needs and weaknesses to call upon Thee. Vouchsafe to us that in distress of our consciences and in the hour of death, we may not be forgetful of Thy Name. Help us with all our possessions, words and works to praise and honor Thee only, and not thereby to seek or win for us a name, but to glorify Thee alone to whom all things belong. Guard us against the shameful evil of ingratitude.

45.

For Help to Avoid Offence

Help that by our lives and good works others may be induced not to exalt us, but to praise Thee in us, and to honor Thy Name. Grant that no one may be offended by our evil works or shortcomings so as to dishonor Thee and to praise Thee less. Keep us from

desiring anything temporal or eternal that is without the praise and honor of Thy Name. If we should ask Thee for such things, we pray Thee not to hear our folly. Help us so to live that we may be found true children of God, and that Thy fatherly Name may not be used falsely or in vain on our account. Amen.

Thy kingdom come.

46.

For Faith, Hope and Love

This miserable life is a kingdom of all sin and evil in which the devil is lord, the source and archknave of all wickedness. But Thy kingdom is a kingdom of every grace and virtue in which the only Lord is Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, the one head and source of every blessing. Therefore, grant us Thy grace and help, dear Father. Give us above all else a true and lasting faith in Christ, and a fearless hope in Thy mercy. In place of every frailty of our sinful conscience, give us a fervent and blessed love toward Thee and all men. Guard us against unbelief, despair, and all envy.

47.

For Virtue, Peace, Unity, etc.

Purge us of the filthy lust of unchastity, and give us a high regard for all things that are pure. Deliver us from discord, strife and warfare, and grant us the virtue, peace, unity, and quiet rest of Thy kingdom. Strengthen us that neither anger nor any other bitterness can defeat Thy kingdom with-

in us. Help that through Thy grace a sweet disposition, a brotherly confidence, and every manner of kindness, goodness and meekness may control us. Preserve us from undue grief and sorrow. Let the joy and pleasure of Thy grace and mercy come to us.

48.

To Serve God with Thoughts, Affections and Will

Ultimately turn from us all sins. Fill us by Thy grace with all virtue and good works. Help us to become Thy kingdom. Grant that with all our thoughts, affections, and will, together with all bodily and spiritual strength, we may obediently serve Thee according to Thy will and commandments. Permit these powers only to be ruled by Thee, and not to obey themselves, the flesh, the world and the devil.

49.

For Extension of God's Kingdom

Help Thy kingdom to begin and increase in us, and daily to further and extend itself. Let not deceptive wickedness and inactivity overtake us in Thy service. Keep us from sliding back again. Give us a firm resolve and the ability not merely to begin to be devout, but much more to continue boldly and prevail, as the Psalmist says: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death; lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him.

50.

For the Coming Kingdom

Help us to remain so steadfast that Thy coming kingdom will include and complete Thy kingdom begun here. Lead us out of this sinful and dangerous life. Help us to hate this life, and

to long for the life that is to come. Enable us not to dread death, but to welcome it. Release us from the love and attachments of this life, that Thy kingdom may be altogether completed in us.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

51.

For the Surrender of Self-Will to God's Will

Our will compared with Thine is never good, but continually evil. Thy will is always far the best, to be most highly cherished and desired by us. Therefore be merciful to us, dear Father, and let not anything be done according to our will. Give, and teach us to maintain a really sane patience, when our will is hindered or broken. Grant that when anyone speaks or is silent, does or leaves undone anything, contrary to our will, that we may not become angry or malicious, neither curse, complain, cry out, judge, condemn nor protest. Help us humbly to yield or surrender our will to that of our opponents and hinderers who accomplish Thy divine and most blessed will as overagainst ours. May we praise and bless them, and do good to them.

52.

For God's Will to Control Ours

Give us grace willingly to acknowledge and bear all sickness, poverty, shame, suffering and misfortune as proceeding from Thy divine will to crucify ours. Grant that we may gladly suffer injury, and guard us

against seeking revenge. Let us not recompense evil for evil, nor repel force by force, but let us have pleasure in Thy will which permits these to come upon us, and let us give praise and thanks to Thee. When something opposes our will, let us not attribute it to the devil or wicked men, but only to Thy will which regulates all things to the hinderance of our will and the greater blessing in Thy kingdom. Help us in accordance with Thy will, cheerfully and submissively to pass out of this life, that we may not become disobedient to Thee through impatience and despair. Make all our bodily organs, eyes, tongue, heart, hands and feet willing not to be left to their own inclinations, but to be held, bound and controlled by Thy will. Guard us against every stubborn, cruel, obstinate and selfish will of our own.

53.

For a Charitable Disposition

Give us true obedience and perfect resignation in all things temporal and eternal. Preserve us from the cruel vice of slandering, defaming, judging and condemning others. O that the great misery and harm caused by such tongues were far from us! Teach us, when we see or hear anything of others that seems blameable and disagreeable to us, to cover it up, and to keep silent concerning it. Help us to complain to Thee alone, and leave all to Thy will, and thus gladly to forgive all our debtors, and sympathize with them.

54.

For Compassion to Those Who Offend Us

Teach us to realize that no one can harm us, unless he does himself a thousandfold greater injury in Thy sight, so that we may be much rather moved to compassion than to anger toward those who offend us, and pity rather than punish them. Help that we may not rejoice when ill betides those who have not done our will, or have otherwise displeased us with their lives. May we not be grieved when they prosper.

Give us this day our daily bread.

55.

For Spiritual Nurture

This bread is our Lord Jesus Christ Who feeds and comforts the soul. Therefore, O heavenly Father, grant us grace that the life, words, works and sufferings of Christ be preached, made known and preserved to us and all the world. Help us to keep His words and works in all walks of life as a powerful example, and an inducement to every virtue. Enable us in our sufferings and tribulations to be strengthened and comforted by His sufferings and cross. Help us to overcome our death by a firm faith in His victory over death, and boldly to follow our beloved Leader into the life beyond.

56.

For Faithful Pastors and Rulers

Give grace to all preachers profitably and blissfully to proclaim Christ and Thy word in all the world. Grant that all who hear Thy word preached may learn to know Christ, and actually better their lives through Him. Exclude

from Thy holy Church all strange doctrines, and preaching in which Christ is not made known. Be merciful to all bishops and ministers, and all in authority, that they may be enlightened by Thy grace, and rightly teach and lead us by words and good examples. Protect all who are weak in the faith that they may not be misled by the wickedness of those in authority.

57.

For Grace to Receive the Sacrament Worthily

Preserve us from false and pernicious doctrines, that partaking our daily bread, we may remain one in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Teach us by grace rightly to regard the sufferings of Christ, gladly to embrace them, and cheerfully regulate our lives accordingly. Let not the holy body of Christ be withheld from us at our last end. Grant that we and all Christians may worthily receive the holy sacrament in due season.

58.

For Universal Peace

Grant us blessed unity and peace amongst all nations. Preserve us from all strife, hatred and warfare, that being undisturbed, we may eat our daily bread and partake of our bodily nourishment to Thy praise. Give understanding and a loyal will to all kings, princes, lords, and councils that they may rule their subjects in a happy and peaceful way. Guard all subjects against rebellion and disobedience.

59.

For Preservation of Home and Property

Teach us by Thy Spirit to manage our homes well and to rule our households in a Christian manner, to Thy service, praise and glory. Preserve our children and servants from sin and shame, as well as from danger and harm to body and soul. Protect the fruits of the fields, and all cattle from lightening, poison, wild beasts, and every possible injury.

60.

For Relief of the Distressed

Thou wilt graciously comfort and succor all who are imprisoned, hungry, thirsty, naked and miserable; also all widows, orphans, sick and sorrowing. In short, give us our daily bread, that Christ may abide in us and we in Him, forever, and that we may worthily bear the name Christian after Him.

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

61.

For Removal of Guilt and the Fear of Judgment

O Father, relieve our consciences now and in the hour of death, from the terror of our guilt and the fear of Thy judgment. Let Thy peace come into our hearts that we may await Thy judgment with joy. Enter not into the severity of Thy judgment with us, for thus no man will be found righteous. Teach us, dear Father, not to trust, nor find comfort, in our own merits or good works, but only to venture and yield ourselves solely and firmly to Thine infinite mercy. In like manner, let us not lose courage on account of our sinful

and guilty lives, but let us esteem Thy mercy higher, broader and stronger than all our being.

62.

For Help to Them That Struggle With Death

Help all men, especially those who are struggling with death and are tempted to despair. Comfort and receive them by Thy pardoning grace. Forgive each one of us our trespasses.

63.

For Deliverance From False Accusers

Give us Thy goodness in place of our wickedness as Thou hast promised to do. Silence all cruel slanderers and accusers, and those who magnify our faults, together with the evil spirit, now and whenever our consciences are worried. Guard us also against all backbiting and exaggerating of others' sins. Judge us not according to the accusations of the devil and our own depressed consciences, and hear not the cry of our enemies who accuse us day and night before Thee, just as we would not listen to the slanderers and accusers of others. Take from our souls the heavy burden of all our sins, so that with a clear, joyful and sincere conscience we may endure and do all things, and live and die in full confidence of Thy mercy.

And lead us not into temptation.

64.

For Strength to Overcome Fleshly Lusts

We have three tempters, the flesh, the world, and the devil. Therefore, we pray Thee, dear Father, give us grace that we may banish the lusts of the flesh. Help us to avoid excessive eating, drinking and sleeping, and to resist indolence and slothfulness. Grant that by fasting, temperate eating, and proper clothing and provision for the body, we may by watching and toiling become useful and fitted for good works. Help us to mortify and to nail with Christ to the cross all evil inclinations and lusts of the flesh with all its cravings and enticements, so that no one need yield to its temptations nor follow them. Help that when we see a beautiful person or other creature it may not be a temptation, but an incentive to admire chastity and to praise Thee in Thy creatures. Grant that when we hear something pleasant, and perceive something lovely, we may not seek lust in it, but Thy praise and glory.

65.

For Protection From Avarice

Preserve us from the great depravity of avarice and greed for the riches of the world. Guard us against seeking the power and glory of this world and acquiescing in its views. Protect us from the treachery of the world, that its deceptions and wealth may not move us to follow it.

66.

For Help to Renounce the World

Strengthen us that the evils and reverses of the world may not lead us into impatience, anger, revenge, or other wrongs. Help us to renounce the lies, deceptions, false promises, and perjuries of the world, and all its good and evil, as we have vowed to Thee in baptism. Enable us to remain true to this vow and daily better our lives.

67.

For Protection Against Temptation

Preserve us from the impulses of the devil. Let us not sanction pride, our own pleasures, and other detractions, for the sake of riches, renown, power, skill, appearance, or any other gift of Thine. Guard us against yielding to hatred and envy for any cause. Preserve us now and until our last moment from following the disputes of faith and despair.

68.

For Strength to Overcome the Enemies of Faith

Heavenly Father, permit us to commend to Thee all who strive and work against great and manifold temptations. Strengthen those who still stand. Restore those who are fallen and are prostrated. Grant us all Thy grace in this miserable and uncertain life, that being continually surrounded by so many adversaries, we may persistently fight with a valiant and firm faith, and finally obtain the eternal crown.

But deliver us from evil.

69. *For Exemption From God's Wrath*

O Father, deliver us from Thine eternal wrath and from the torture of hell. Spare us from Thy severe judgment in death and at the last day. Guard us against sudden and eternal death. Preserve us from calamity by fire and water, hail and lightning, dearth and hunger.

70. *For the Accomplishment of Good in all Trials*

Protect us from war and bloodshed, from great plagues, pestilence, and other grievous diseases. Guard us against all ills and distresses of the body. Nevertheless, let Thy divine will, the furtherance of Thy kingdom, and the glory of Thy Name, be accomplished in all these things.

71. *For Assurance of Being Heard*

Amen. O God help that we may without wavering make all these petitions. Let us never doubt that Thou hast heard us, and wilt hear us again in this prayer, and that it shall be yea and not nay, nor doubtful. Therefore, we gladly say amen, which means true and certain. Amen.

III.

SIMPLE INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRAYER TO PETER, THE BARBER, AT WITTENBERG.

a. Note: Luther wrote these instructions when Peter his barber, inquired of him how an ordinary workingman could pray without being disturbed by worldly thoughts and occupations. There is added a brief explanation of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.

Dear Peter, I want to tell you as well as I can, how I myself view and practice prayer. May our Lord God grant that you and many others shall profit by it.

b. First, when I feel that I have become cold and indifferent to prayer through hostile thoughts and occupations (since the devil and the flesh always oppose and hinder prayer), I take my Psalter into my closet, or if it is the right day and hour, I go to church with the congregation and begin to say by myself, as the children would repeat, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and if there is a little time left, several sayings of Christ, Paul, or the Psalms.

c. It is well that prayer should be made the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night, and that we diligently guard against the false and deceitful thoughts which suggest: Wait a while, I will pray an hour later, I must first do this and that. With such thoughts a person drifts from prayer into occupations which surround and hold him until the prayer of the day is omitted.

d. Nevertheless some duties present themselves that are as good as, or better than, prayer, especially when necessity demands. For such there is a proverb credited to Jerome: All works of the faithful are prayer; and another saying: He who works faithfully prays doubly. This must have been said for the reason that a faithful person fears and honors God in his work, and remembers His commandment, so that he wrongs no one, neither will he steal nor defraud in any way. Such thoughts and faith will without doubt make a prayer and at the same time a praise offering of one's work.

e. Again, it must be true on the contrary, that the work of an unbeliever is mere cursing, and he who works unfaithfully curses doubly. For the thoughts of his heart must be such while he works, that he despises God, breaks

His commandment, and intends to wrong his neighbor by stealing and cheating. What else are such thoughts than real curses against God and men, through which a person's work becomes a two-fold curse, in that he curses himself also. Such will remain failures and beggars to the end.

f. Christ plainly speaks of unceasing prayer in Luke 11: Men ought always to pray. For we ought to guard continually against sin and wrong, which cannot be done where God is not feared, and His commandments are not kept in mind, Ps. 1: Blessed is the man who meditates day and night in the law of God.

g. Still we must guard ourselves against getting away from the right kind of prayer, by deeming our own works necessary, which they are no t, and thus at length become slothful, cold, and weary in prayer: For the devil is not idle nor inactive around us, and our flesh is still too active and eager to sin, and inclined against the spirit of prayer.

h. Now when the heart is aroused and has come to itself through such admonitions, kneel or stand with folded hands, look toward heaven, and think or say as briefly as you can:

72.

Prayer According to God's Command and Promise

O Heavenly Father, Thou blessed God, I am a poor and miserable sinner, not worthy that I should lift up my hands and eyes to Thee in prayer. But since Thou hast commanded us all to pray, and hast promised to hear us, and at the same time hast taught us the words and manner to pray, obedient to Thy command and relying on Thy gracious promise, I come in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, and pray with all Thy holy Christians on earth, as He has taught us to pray:

Our Father Who art in heaven.
Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

After this, repeat a part or as much as you desire, beginning with the first petition:

Hallowed be Thy name.

73.

For the Destruction of False Religions

Ah yes, Lord God, dear Father, hallow Thy Name in us and in all the world. Destroy and extinguish the abomination, idolatry, and heresy of the Turks, the Pope, and all false teachers or factious spirits who falsely bear Thy name and shamefully take it in vain, grossly blaspheme it, and claim and boast, it is Thy word and the command of the Church, when it is the lies and deceptions of the devil. Wherewith, under the guise of Thy Name, they mislead so many poor souls throughout the whole world, and on this account persecute, kill, and shed innocent blood, thinking thereby to render divine service to Thee.

74.

For Conversion and Restraint of the Profane

Dear God, convert and restrain. Convert those who are still to be converted, that they with us and we with them, may hallow and praise Thy holy Name both by pure and true teaching, and a good and holy life. Restrain them who refuse to be converted, that they must cease to misuse, defame, and dishonor Thy holy Name, and mislead Thy needy people.

75.

For Protection and Extension of God's Kingdom

O dear God and Father, Thou seest how not only the wisdom and reason of the world disregard Thy Name, and cast Thine honor to falsehood and the devil, but also how they set against Thy kingdom all the power, might, riches, and glory which Thou hast given them on earth to rule the world and serve Thee. They are many, great, mighty, bloated and glutted. They pester, hinder and disturb the little flock of Thy kingdom. They think they are doing God a great service by not tolerating on earth those who are few, despised and weak. Dear Lord God and Father, convert and restrain. Convert them who are yet to become children and members of Thy kingdom, that they may with us and we with them serve Thee in Thy kingdom in the right faith and true love, and pass out of this kingdom begun here, into Thine eternal kingdom. Restrain those who would not withdraw their might and means from disturbing Thy kingdom, that they may be cast from their thrones, and being humiliated must cease to molest Thy kingdom. Amen.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

76.

For Help to Do God's Will, and to Despise Man's Malice

O dear God and Father, Thou knowest how the world where it cannot completely banish Thy Name, and destroy Thy kingdom, is engaged day and night in malice and evil deeds, practices intrigues and strange schemes, and how they take counsel together, whisper to each other, comfort and strengthen one another, threaten and flare up, and being filled with all manner of malice, they oppose Thy Name, Thy word, Thy kingdom, and all Thy children, to destroy them. Wherefore, dear God and Father, convert and restrain. Convert those who are yet to know Thy gracious will, that they with us and we with them may be obedient to Thy will, and patiently and gladly endure all evil, the cross, and every tribulation, and thereby acknowledge, test, and experience Thy good, gracious, and perfect will. Restrain those who would not desist from their rage, fury, hatred, threatenings, and malice, to work mischief. Bring their counsels, their wicked plans and practices to shame and to naught, that what is sung in the 7th Psalm may come upon them.

Give us this day our daily bread.

77.

For Peace and Good Government

O dear God and Father, add also Thy blessing to this temporal and bodily life. Graciously give us blessed peace, and preserve us against war and strife. Give our dear ruler success and safety before his enemies. Endue him with wisdom and understanding that he may with quiet grace rule his realm. Give good counsel and will to all kings, princes and lords to keep their land and people in righteousness and peace. Especially guide and help our dear ruler, under whose protection Thou dost guard us, that, being protected from all evil and secure against all wicked tongues and unfaithful people, he may have a happy administration.

78.

For Protection of Home and Family

Give grace also to all subjects to be obedient and to serve faithfully. Help all classes in city and country to be devout and to show love and consideration, one to another. Give favorable seasons and good harvests. I also commend to Thee house and land, wife and children. Help me to rule them well, and to support and train them in Christian order. Restrain and check the destroyer and all evil angels who would hinder and harm these providences of Thine.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

79.

For God's Mercy

O dear God and Father enter not with us into judgment, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. Neither count us amongst sinners, because we are so ungrateful for all Thy unspeakable goodness to body and soul, and because we daily and frequently stray and sin more than we know and are able to understand, Ps. 19:13. Consider not how good or evil we are, but remember Thine infinite mercy granted to us in Christ, Thy dear Son.

80.

For Our Enemies

Do Thou also forgive all our enemies, and all who offend and wrong us, as we also forgive them from the heart. For they do themselves the greater injury by provoking Thee in harming us. Since we will not be benefited by their downfall, we would rather see them happy with us.

He who feels that he cannot readily forgive should pray for grace, that he may be enabled to forgive. But this admonition belongs to the sermon.

And lead us not into temptation.

81.

For Triumph Over the Devil

O Dear God and Father, keep us wide-awake and active, ardent and diligent in Thy word and service, that we may not become over-confident, indolent and indifferent, as though we possessed all things, so that the enraged devil may not overtake us by his

treachery, nor rob us of Thy precious word, nor bring about discord and factions amongst us, nor otherwise lead us into spiritual and bodily sin and shame. Give us wisdom and power through Thy Spirit, that we may bravely withstand him, and triumph over him.

But deliver us from evil.

82.

For Help to Pass Safely Through Many Dangers

O dear God and Father, this miserable life is so full of sorrow and misfortune, so full of dangers and uncertainties, so full of unfaithfulness and wickedness, (as St. Paul says: The days are evil), that we might indeed be weary of life and desirous of death. But, Thou, dear Father, knowest our weakness, therefore help us to pass safely through these manifold evils. And when the time comes, grant us a gracious end and a blessed departure from this vale of tears, that we may not be terrified nor disheartened by death, but with firm faith commend our souls into Thy hands. Amen.

Amen.

a. Finally note that you must always emphasize the Amen, and never doubt that God assuredly hears you with all grace, and says Yea to your prayer. Consider also that you do not stand or kneel by yourself, but that all Christendom, or all devout Christians are with you, and you amongst them in harmonious and united prayer which God cannot despise. And do not give up praying until you said or thought: Well, I surely know that this prayer is heard of God. This is what Amen means.

b. You shall also know that I do not advise you to speak all these words in one prayer, for it would finally become a useless babbling and empty rigmarole, repeatedly read from the book, as is the use of the rosary by deluded people, and as are the many prayers of the priests and monks. But I would by these instructions have the heart led and taught regarding the thoughts it should include while praying the Lord's Prayer. When the heart is really interested, and becomes eager to pray, it will indeed express such thoughts in other (perhaps fewer or more) words.

c. I do not confine myself to these words and phrases, but today I speak the words one way, tomorrow another, just as I am fervent and desirous to pray, nevertheless I stick as closely as I can to the same thought and meaning. However, it frequently happens that in one petition or part I wander into such rich thoughts that I let the remaining six petitions go.

d. When such rich, good thoughts come, the other petitions should be omitted to give place to them, and we should listen in silence, and by no means interrupt them. For it is then that the Holy Spirit Himself preaches, and one word of His preaching is far better than a thousand of our prayers. In this way I have often learned more in one prayer, than I could have gotten out of much reading and writing.

e. Therefore it is of utmost importance that the heart becomes free and eager to pray, as Sirach says: Prepare your heart for prayer, so that you may not tempt God. What else is it than tempting God, when the mouth uses vain repetitions in prayer, and the heart is wandering elsewhere? For example, a certain priest prayed as follows: O God protect me by Thy help. Servant, have you hitched up? Lord, make haste to help me! Maid, go milk the cow. Glory be to the Father and to the Son. Speed, boy, as though the horse might throw you, etc.

Such prayers I have frequently heard during my days in popedom, as nearly all their prayers are of this kind. With them God is only mocked. It were better they played instead, if they cannot and will not do anything better. For I am sorry to say that, under the rules of a religious order, I myself have in my time prayed many an hour, until the time was up and the psalm ended, before I became aware whether I had begun, or was in the middle of the prayer.

While they do not all blurt out like the above named priest, mixing their work and prayers, yet they do the same thing in heart and thoughts. They confuse the hundreds with the thousands, and when it is over, they do not know what they have done, or through what they have gone.

They begin with Laudate, and immediately they are in fool's paradise.

f. That I consider their prayers in this manner is not intended that any one should make a laughing stock of them, but that he might see the thoughts which a cold and inattentive heart mixes with prayer. Heaven be praised that I have come to realize clearly that prayer is not well done, when one forgets what he has said. For in a real prayer every thought and word is carefully considered from the beginning to the end.

g. Real prayer is done as attentively as a good and diligent barber fixes his mind and eyes upon his razor and the hair, and does not forget where he cuts. If he talks a great deal while he shaves, or looks around and has his thoughts elsewhere, he might indeed cut a person's mouth, nose or throat. Thus anything that is to be done well demands the entire attention of a person, as it is said: He who thinks all sorts of thoughts thinks nothing and accomplishes nothing. How much more does prayer require the whole heart, if it is actually to be a good prayer.

h. This is briefly spoken of the Lord's Prayer, or prayer in general, as I am accustomed to pray. For to this very day I feed like a babe on the Lord's Prayer, and eat and drink of it like a grown person, and cannot get enough of it. It is to me above the Psalter which indeed I like very much, the very best prayer. Truly, it will be found that the real Master has composed and taught it. It is a great pity that such a prayer of such a Master should be chattered and babbled in all the world without devotion. Many perhaps pray a thousand Pater Nosters a year, and if they were to pray thus a thousand years, they would still not have tasted nor prayed one jot or tittle of it. In short, the Lord's Prayer, as well as the word and Name of God, is the greatest martyr on earth. For everybody grieves and abuses it, and few cheer and gladden it by rightly using it.

A Plain Form In Which a Person Should Medidate On The Ten Commandments.

If I have the time and strength before the Lord's Prayer, I meditate on the Ten Commandments in a similar manner. Thus I take one after another, so that as far as possible I may be altogether free to pray each one, and I make a four-strand wreath of every Commandment.

Accordingly I consider each Commandment as follows, or in similar thoughts and words: 1. As a precept, which it is in itself, and I take to heart what our Lord so earnestly requires of me; 2. I make of it an occasion for thanksgiving; 3. A confession; 4. A prayer.

The First Commandment:
I am the Lord Thy God.

83.

For Reliance on God Alone

Eternal God, Thou dost teach me, and ask of me a hearty reliance on Thee in all things. It is Thine earnest desire to be my God. As such I must regard Thee, or suffer the loss of eternal salvation. My heart shall neither build nor rely on anything else, whether it be property, honor, wisdom, power, purity, or any other creature.

84.

Thanksgiving for God's Revelation of Himself

I thank Thee for Thine infinite mercy that Thou dost condescend to me, a lost person, in such a fatherly way. Unbidden, unsought, and undeserved by me, Thou dost offer Thyself to be my God, and wilt accept me. Thou wilt be my comfort, help, protection and strength in every time of need. Although we poor, blind creatures have sought many gods elsewhere, and would still have to seek, if Thou hadst not openly made Thyself known and presented Thyself to us as our God. Who is able forever and ever to thank Thee sufficiently for this blessing.

85.

Sorrow on Account of Ingratitude

I own and confess my great sin of ingratitude, that throughout my entire life I have so shamefully despised this precious precept and gift. I am sorry and pray for pardon because I have so grievously provoked Thine anger with my countless idolatries.

86.

For Grace to Know and Live Better

I pray Thee, O my God and Lord, help me by Thy grace daily to learn and understand this commandment better, and with hearty confidence act accordingly. Guard my heart that I may no more become so forgetful and ungrateful as to seek other gods on earth, or comfort in any other creature. My own God, enable me to remain pure, graceful, and wholly Thine. Amen. Dear Lord God and Father. Amen.

After this, if I have the time and inclination, I also turn the Second Commandment into a four-strand wreath.

The Second Commandment:

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord Thy God in vain.

87.

To Glorify God's Name, and not Our Own

Dear God, here Thou teachest me that I shall keep Thy Name excellent, bright and holy. I am not to curse, swear, lie, nor deceive by it. Nor shall I seek my own honor and name, but humbly call upon Thy Name, worship, praise, and glorify Thee. Let it be all my glory and boast that Thou art my God, and that I am Thy poor creature and unworthy servant.

88.

Thanks for Protection in God's Name

I thank Thee for the precious gift that Thou hast made known and given to me in Thy Name, and that I can glory in it, and am permitted to be called a creature and servant of Thine. Thy Name is my refuge like a mighty fortress to which the righteous fleeth and is protected.

89.

For Forgiveness of Dishonoring God's Name

I confess my great and shameful sin continued throughout my life against this commandment. I have not only failed to call upon Thy holy Name, and left it without praise and honor, but I have also been ungrateful for this gift, and have disgracefully misused it in such sins as swearing, lying, deceiving, etc. I am sorry on account of this and I pray for grace and forgiveness.

90.

For the Right Use of God's Name

I ask for help and strength that I may henceforth learn this commandment well. Dear Lord, preserve me from base ingratitude, profanity and sin against Thy holy Name. Help me to be thankful for Thy Name, and rightly to respect and honor it. Amen.

a. As I said while meditating on the Lord's Prayer, I again admonish that if the Holy Spirit should enter into these meditations and begin to preach into your heart with rich and illumined thoughts, then do Him the honor to let these written thoughts go. Be silent when you may listen to Him who knows infinitely more than you. Heed and write down what He preaches, and you shall experience wonders in the law of God, as David says.

The Third Commandment:

Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy.

91.

For the Proper Observance of the Sabbath

Dear God, Thou teachest me that the Sabbath was not instituted for idleness, nor fleshly lusts, but that it shall be kept holy by us. It is not kept by our works and actions which are unholy, but through the word of God which alone is altogether pure and holy, and

sanctifies all that comes in contact with it, whether it be time, place, person, work or rest. Through Thy word also all our works become holy, as St. Paul says in I Tim. 4:5, Every creature is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Thus I learn in this Commandment that on the Sabbath I shall first of all hear and consider the word of God, and then be thankful in the same word, praise God for all His blessings, and pray for myself and all the world.

He who thus uses the Sabbath, keeps it holy. He who fails to do this, is worse than they who work on this day.

92.

For Right Observance of the Sabbath

Dear Lord God, I thank Thee for Thy great and precious grace and blessing which Thou hast given us in Thy word and in the preaching of it, which is a treasure that no human heart can fully appreciate. Thou hast especially commanded us to use these blessings on the Sabbath. For Thy word is the only light in the darkness of this world. It is a word of life, and comfort, and every blessing. Where this beloved and healing word is not found, there are, as we daily see, dreadful and horrible darkness, error, strife, death, every misfortune, and the devil's own tyranny.

93.

Penitence for Despising the Preaching of the Word

I acknowledge and confess my great sin and shameful ingratitude, that I have spent the Sabbaths so wickedly throughout my life. I have woefully neglected Thy precious word, and have been too indolent, unwilling and loath to hear it. I have not eagerly desired it nor ever given due thanks for it. My dear God, I have often suffered Thee to preach in vain to me, and have left this precious treasure to slip from me, and have trodden it under foot. With pure and divine goodness Thou hast tolerated all this of me, and hast never ceased on this account to continue to preach and call for my soul's salvation, with all fatherly and divine love and faithfulness. I am sorry for this and I pray for grace and forgiveness.

94.

For Devout Pastors

Dear Father, I pray for me and all the world that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in Thy holy word, and not take it from us on account of our sin, sloth and ungratefulness. Preserve us from factious spirits and false teachers. Send us true and right laborers into Thy harvest, who shall be devout pastors and preachers. Grant us all grace that we may humbly hear, receive and honor their word as Thine own, and heartily praise and thank Thee for it.

The Fourth Commandment:

Honor thy father and mother.

95.

Recognition of God's Blessings Through Our Parents

O God, here I learn to recognize Thee as my Creator. How wonderfully Thou hast made me both in body and soul. Thou hast given me life through my parents, and hast given them kind hearts to serve me, their child, with all their strength. They have brought me into the world, nourished me, waited on me, cared for me, and trained me through great diligence, anxiety, danger, effort and labor. Up to this time Thou hast guarded me against countless perils and needs, and hast frequently aided me, Thy creature, in body and soul, as though Thou createst me anew every hour, while the devil begrudges every moment of my life.

96.

Thanks for the Preservation of Home and State

I thank Thee, my bountiful and gracious Creator, for myself and all the world, that in this commandment Thou hast established and made secure the replenishing and the preservation of the human race, together with the home and state. Without these two institutions the world could not endure for one year, since there is no peace without earthly rulers; and where there is no peace, there can be no home; and where there is no home, the protecting care of father and mother would altogether cease, and children could not be

properly born and brought up. In this commandment Thou dost support and protect both home and state, and dost order obedience on the part of children and subjects. Thou also providest that this must be done, and where it is not done, Thou wilt not permit it to go unpunished. If it were otherwise, children would long ago have broken up the home through disobedience, and subjects by their rebellion would have destroyed the state, for they are far more numerous than parents and rulers. Therefore, this providence also is an unspeakable blessing.

97.

Grief on Account of Disrespect to Parents

I acknowledge and confess to Thee my painful disobedience and sin. Contrary to this commandment of my God, I have not honored my parents, have been disobedient, frequently grieved and offended them, received their parental reproof with impatience, complained against them, despised their well-meant admonitions, and have much more readily followed the advice of loose companions, and mischievous persons. Thou dost justly curse such disobedient children, and deniest them long life. Wherefore many go down and perish miserably before they arrive at maturity. For he who does not obey father and mother, must obey the officers of the law, or else wretchedly lose his life through the wrath of God. All

this grieves me, and I pray for grace and pardon.

98.

For Obedience to Parents and Rulers

I pray Thee for myself and all the world to grant us Thy grace, and richly to pour Thy blessing upon the home and the state. Help us henceforth to be devout, to honor our parents, to be obedient to our rulers, to withstand the devil, and refuse to follow his enticements to disobedience and strife. Enable us by our deeds to improve our homes and nation, and to preserve peace to Thy praise and glory, for our own benefit, and the furtherance of everything that is good. Grant that we may acknowledge these Thy gifts and give thanks to Thee for them.

99.

For Parents, Masters and Rulers

Give also wisdom and understanding to parents, masters, and rulers, to provide well and rule peaceably. Guard them against tyranny, rage, and madness, and divert them from these wrongs. Help them to honor Thy word and not to persecute nor injure anyone. For where these precepts are not put into practice, the devil is the chief master, and his rule is wicked and destructive.

a. If you are a father or mother, it behooves you not to forget yourself, your children, and your servants, but to pray for them in earnest:

100.

Head of Family Prays for Divine Guidance

Dear Father, Thou hast honored me with Thy name and office and wilt have me esteemed and called a father. Grant me Thy grace and blessing to rule and support my wife, children, and servants in a godly and Christian manner. Give me wisdom and strength to train them well. Grant them good hearts and wills to follow, and be obedient to, Thy precepts. For both the children and their welfare are gifts of Thine. Help that they may be well bred and continue in that which is good. Otherwise a home will be nothing but a rough house, a school for rogues, as is seen amongst godless and rude people.

The Fifth Commandment:

Thou shalt not kill.

101.

Recognizing the Right Relationship of Neighbors

Dear Lord, here Thou teachest me what Thou wouldst have me do. I shall so love my neighbor as not to injure his body by words or deeds. Neither shall I avenge myself on him, nor harm him through anger, impatience, envy, hatred, or any other evil. But I shall know that I am indebted to help and advise him in all his bodily needs, for in this commandment Thou dost direct me to protect my neighbor's body; Thou also orderest my neighbor to defend me, as Sirach reminds us, Thou hast commended to each one his neighbor.

102.

Thanks for Protection From Violence

I thank Thee for Thine unspeakable love, care and faithfulness toward me. Thou hast placed a great and strong wall of protection around my body that all men are in duty bound to spare and safeguard me, and in turn Thou wilt have me treat all men likewise. Where this is not done, Thou dost also hold the sword over me, and hast commanded it to be used to punish those who fail to do what Thou commandest. If it were not for this Thy commandment and its enforcement, the devil would bring about such murder amongst us people, that no one could live securely for one hour, as is the case when Thou art provoked to anger and dost permit this thankless and disobedient world to be punished.

103.

Deploring Cruelty to Fellowmen

I confess and lament before Thee, my own and the world's wickedness, that we are not only so cruelly ungrateful for Thy fatherly love and care to us, but that at the same time we shamefully neglect to learn to know these commandments and teachings, and despise them as though they did not concern us, or as though we derived no benefit from them. And besides we go on with a sense of security and do not make it a matter of conscience to forsake, despise, even persecute, injure, and at heart kill our neighbor contrary to this commandment. We pursue our anger, rage, and every malice,

as though we were doing right and well thereby. Truly it is time for us wicked sinners to weep and lament, because like wild and rude people and raving beasts, we trample, push, scratch, tear, bite, and devour one another, and fail to heed this earnest commandment of God.

104.

For Brotherly Meekness

I pray Thee, dear Father, enable us to know this Thy holy commandment, and help us to live and act accordingly. Protect us from the destroyer who is the source of all injury and murder. Grant us Thy rich grace that the people with us and we with them shall be friendly, kind and gentle one to another, forgive each other from the heart, and endure each others faults and shortcomigs in Christian and brotherly meekness, and thus live in right peace and unity, as this commandment teaches and requires us to do.

The Sixth Commandment:

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

105.

For the Maintenance of Chastity

Dear God, here Thou teachest me again what Thou dost contemplate and desire of me, namely, that I shall be chaste, orderly and temperate in thoughts, words and deeds. I shall not disgrace any man's wife, daughter or maidservant, but shall help, rescue, and protect them, and do whatever is necessary to maintain their honor and

discipline. I shall also help to stop all idle talk that would rob them of their decency. For I am responsible, as Thou dost require of me not only to abstain from bringing my neighbor's family into reproach, but hast also in duty bound me to help him keep and guard their discipline and respect, as I would have him do to me, and observe this commandment toward me and mine.

106.

Thanks for God's Strict Demand of Pure Living

My dear and faithful Father, I thank Thee for Thy grace and goodness that in this commandment Thou takest in Thy care and keeping my husband, son, servant, wife, daughter and maid-servant, and strictly commandest that no one shall disgrace them. Thou dost protect me, remainest firm and wilt not permit it to go unpunished when anyone violates this command and protection of Thine. No one can escape Thee, he will either have to pay the penalty here, or at last rue his passion in hell fire. For Thou desirest chastity and wilt not permit adultery. We daily see how Thine anger at length seizes and miserably destroys all profligate and impenitent persons. Else it were impossible in the presence of the polluting devil for one hour to keep wife, child and servant decent and respectable, and there would be open lewdness and beastly conduct, as is the case where Thou dost withhold

Thine hand in anger and permittest carnality to run riot.

107.

Grief on Account of Inclination to Impurity

I acknowledge and confess my sins before Thee and all the world that I have sinned against this commandment throughout my life in thoughts, words, and deeds. I have not only been ungrateful for this excellent gift and precept but have even murmured against Thee that Thou hast commanded such chastity and discipline, and dost not permit any kind of prostitution and unchastity to go free and unpunished. The sins against this commandment such as marriage despised, mocked and condemned, are open and shameless, the coarsest, and most readily noticed of all sins. This grieves me.

108.

For Grace to Keep This Commandment

I pray Thee for me and all the world to give us grace to keep this commandment, with heart and soul, that not only we may live chaste lives, but that we may also help and admonish others to do likewise.

a. Thus I continue with the other commandments as I have time, leisure, and inclination to do so. For as I have said, I would bind no one to these thoughts and words of mine, but I have merely given an example which may be followed by those who chose to do so, or may be improved upon by such as are able. All the commandments may be taken at a time, or as many as one chooses. For when the soul chances upon a thing, whether it be good or evil, and is in earnest, it can think more in a moment than the tongue can speak in ten hours, or the pen can write in ten days. Such a quick, subtle, and mighty thing is the soul or spirit. Accordingly the soul can very quickly pray the Ten Commandments in all the four lines of thought here suggested, if it wants to do so and is in earnest about it.

The Seventh Commandment:

Thou shalt not steal.

109.

Recognition of the Lord's Protection of Property

Here Thou teachest me not to take my neighbor's property, nor to keep it in my possession secretly or openly against his will. I am not to be unfaithful in serving and working, nor deceitful in business transactions, so as not to acquire my means dishonestly. But I shall support myself in the sweat of my brow, and eat my own bread with the upright. I shall also assist my neighbor that his property like my own shall not be taken away by fraudulent means. I also learn that out of fatherly care and with great zeal, Thou dost in this commandment secure and protect my possessions, since Thou dost forbid a man to steal anything from me. Where this commandment is not heeded, Thou hast provided a penalty, and hast ordered the authorities to punish the transgressor. Where these fail Thou Thyself wilt punish, for thieves must eventually become beggars.

110.

Thanks for God's Oversight

I thank Thee for Thy goodness and faithfulness that Thou hast given to me and all the world this good precept, and with it keepest watch and guard, for where Thou dost not keep guard no one will have a piece of bread or money remaining in the house.

111.

Contrition for Wronging Anyone

I confess All my sins and ungratefulness, wherever I have wronged anyone, or have been unfaithful and dishonest during my life, and plead for pardon.

112.

For a Decrease of all Dishonesty

I pray Thee, dear Father, to grant Thy grace that I and all the world may learn and regard this Thy commandment, and that accordingly we may better ourselves so that stealing, robbing, oppression, treachery and wrong may decrease, finally come to an end at the last day, toward which all the prayers of the saints and all creatures tend. Rom. 8:19.

The Eighth Commandment:

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

113.

God's Provision for Truthfulness

Dear Father, here Thou teachest us to be true to each other, and to avoid all lying and backbiting, and gladly to hear and speak the best of others. Thou hast herewith established a wall and a protection for our reputation and innocence, against wicked mouths and false tongues which Thou wilt not permit to go unpunished.

114.

Thanks for the 8th Commandment

I thank Thee for both the precept and the protection which Thou dost so graciously give us in this commandment.

115. *For Forgiveness of Wronging Neighbors*

I confess, and ask for grace, because I have spent my life so sinfully and ungratefully with falsehoods and evil speakings against my neighbors whom I owe the protection of all their honor and innocence, as I myself would like to have it.

116. *For Wholesome Tongues*

We ask Thee for help henceforth to keep this commandment, and pray for wholesome tongues.

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments:

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

117. *Protection From Covetousness*

Dear Father, here Thou teachest us how we shall not by a pretence of right release, drain, nor extort our neighbor's property, but help him to keep it, as we ourselves would be helped to keep ours. Thou art also a protection against the keen devices and the intrigues of the worldly-minded, who will finally receive their punishment.

118. I thank Thee for this protection.

119. I confess my sin of covetousness with sorrow and regret.

120. I ask for help and strength to become devout and keep Thy commandments.

a. These are the Ten Commandments considered in the fourfold sense of textbook, hymnbook, book of confession, and prayerbook. From it the heart should be brought to itself, and become fervent in prayer. But see to it that you do not take all or too large a portion at a time, lest your soul be wearied. Effective prayer is not long drawn out, but frequent and fervent. It is enough if you have a fragment with which to strike a spark in your heart. The spirit must and will give grace, and will teach the heart further how it is to be cleared and freed by the word of God from intrusive thoughts and contrivances.

Simple Suggestions to Meditate on the Creed.

He who still has time and inclination, may do likewise with the Creed, making a four-strand wreath of it. The Creed contains three great main divisions or articles according to the three Persons of the Divine Majesty, as they are arranged in the Catechism.

The First Article:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

Recognizing God as Creator of all that Exists

121. Eternal God, Thou teachest me what I am, whence I came, and where heaven and earth began. I am a work and creature of Thine, for of myself and in myself I am nothing, know nothing, and am not able to do anything. What have I been a thousand years ago? What have heaven and earth been before the creation? Even nothing as that which will never be created remains nothing. What I am, and know, and am able to do, is a creation of Thine. I have nothing at all to boast before Thee, for of myself I am nothing at all. Thou art my Creator, and art able to destroy me any moment.

122.

Thanks for the Gifts with Which God Has Endowed Us

I thank Thee from the heart that by Thy goodness we have been made out of nothing into such excellent beings with body, soul, reason, and senses, and that we are daily preserved out of nothing, and that Thou hast made us lords over the earth, fishes, birds, beasts, etc.

123.

Lamenting Ingratitude

I confess and lament my unbelief and ingratitude, because I have not taken Thy goodness to heart, and have failed to believe, consider and acknowledge it, being more ungrateful than the creatures devoid of reason.

124.

Prayer for True Faith

I pray for a true and sure faith that I may henceforth earnestly believe and consider Thee, my dear God, to be my Creator.

The Second Article:

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

125.

Acknowledging Christ as Our Saviour

Here Thy great light shines again, and Thou teachest us how we who would be lost forever have been redeemed through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, from Death into which we have fallen after creation through Adam's sin. As in the First Article, I had to include myself amongst the creatures of God and was not permitted to doubt, so I must now also without doubt count myself with the redeemed. In each instance I am taught to place the word "our" first: thus, Jesus Christ, our suffering, our dying, our risen Lord, etc., knowing that it is all ours and concerns us, and that I am included in "our," as the word itself indicates.

126.

Joy and Thanksgiving for Redemption

I thank Thee from the heart for this wonderful grace, and I am glad for this redemption.

127.

Sorrow on Account of Unbelief

I bitterly lament and confess my shameful unbelief and doubt concerning this grace. Alas! I am reminded here, how much idolatry I have practiced contrary to this faith by worshiping saints and countless works of my own, which have stood in the way of this redemption.

128.

For Preservation in the True Faith

I pray Thee, dear Father, henceforth to keep me to the end of my life in the true and pure faith in Jesus Christ, my Lord.

The Third Article:

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

This is the third great light which shows us where this Creator and Redeemer is actually to be found and met here upon earth, and where all will finally abide, of which much could be said. We are taught where the Christian Church is, in which we find God the Creator, God the Redeemer, God the Holy Ghost who daily sanctifies through the forgiveness of sins. The Church is where God's word is rightly preached and made known by this faith. Here again you have to think a great deal of what the Holy Spirit daily does in the Church.

129.

For a Firm and Abiding Faith

I thank Thee, dear God and Father, that Thou hast called and permitted me to come into Thy Church. I confess and lament my unbelief and thanklessness in not appreciating all these blessings. Grant me a true and firm faith that will continue until I shall arrive where all things abide forever, which will be after the resurrection of the dead, in everlasting life. Amen.

130.

For Preservation, Redemption and Sanctification

O God and Father, give us graciously what belongs to the body and its life. O Thou Son of God, free us from sin, and mercifully grant us Thy Spirit. O God, the Holy Ghost, heal, comfort, and make us strong against the devil, and finally give us the victory, and the resurrection from the dead. Amen.

IV.

PRAYERS FOR ENLIGHTENMENT FROM GOD'S WORD.

We call upon God for grace: (1) To enable us to learn His word well; (2) To live devoutly in accordance with it; (3) To die happy in believing it.

131. *Before Going to Church*

Dear God, Thou dost speak through Thy beloved Son: Blessed are they that hear God's word. How much better it were for us, O merciful and eternal God, continually to call Thee blessed with glad hearts, and to praise and thank Thee that Thou hast made Thyself known to us miserable worms in such a friendly and fatherly way, and dost speak to us of the greatest and highest things, which are eternal life and blessedness. In like manner Thou dost not fail, graciously to call us through Thy Son to hear Thy word, when He says: Blessed are they that hear God's word and keep it. Even though we are dust and ashes and stand in need of Thy word a thousand times more than Thou needest hearers, yet Thou wouldst not be without our hearing. O how inexpressibly wonderful and great are Thy goodness and patience! Again, how pitiful the thanklessness and total blindness of those who not only fail to hear Thy word, but also maliciously despise, persecute, and blaspheme it. O God the Father of all

poor, miserable souls, grant us all Thy grace, and enlighten us with Thy truth. Praise, honor and thanks be to Thee throughout eternity. Amen.

132.

While Entering Church

O God, the Father of all mercy, we sincerely thank Thee at all times that according to the boundless riches of Thy grace Thou hast brought to us the treasure of Thy word, in which we have the knowledge of Thy dear Son. This is a sure pledge to us of the life and salvation that shall be ours in heaven, and is prepared for all who remain firm in true faith and fervent love to the end. O merciful Father, we hope and pray that Thou wilt preserve us and make us perfect with all the elect, and wilt keep us one in the mind and image of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

133.

After Having Attended Divine Services

O dear God, give us grace that like Paul and David, and other saints, we also may highly esteem our treasure which is the same as theirs. Help us to cherish it above our possessions on earth, and to thank Thee from the heart that Thou hast honored us with it in preference to thousands of others. Thou couldst have let us go astray as well as the Turks, the Tartars, the Jews and other idolators who know nothing of this treasure; or Thou couldst have left us hardened like those who blaspheme and condemn our treasure. It

is pure grace that Thou hast placed us in Thy green pastures, and hast so richly provided us with the bread of heaven and the water of life, for which we owe Thee the more hearty thanks. Dear Lord Jesus Christ, prepare, strengthen, and establish us thoroughly in Thine eternal kingdom with all the fulness of Thy wisdom and knowledge. To Thee be praise and thanks in eternity. Amen.

Prayer for the Grace of the Holy Spirit.

134.

For a Right Understanding

Lord God, dear Father, who through Thy Holy Spirit hast taught and enlightened the hearts of Thy believers, grant us through the same Spirit to have a right understanding and at all times to rejoice in His comfort and power, through Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

135.

Before the Sermon

Eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant us Thy Holy Spirit who writes the preached word into our hearts, so that we may receive and believe it, and be gladdened and comforted by it in eternity. Glorify Thy word in our hearts and make it so bright and warm that we may find pleasure in it, and through Thy holy inspiration think what is right, and by Thy power fulfill the same, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord. Amen.

136. *After the Sermon*

Dear Lord Christ who hast enlightened my heart with Thy truth, grant me also Thy Spirit and power to do and leave undone whatever pleases Thy gracious will. Amen.

For Preservation in God's Word.

137. *For a Blessed and Sure Hope*

O Father of all mercy, who hast begun Thy work in us, do Thou further endow us with all fulness of wisdom and knowledge, that we may be assured in our hearts and fully know how the Spirit who has raised up our Lord, also enlivens the faith within us, with like power and strength. Through Him we have also risen from the dead according to His mighty power, which works in us through Thy holy word. Help us to grow in the knowledge of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to remain firm in the confession of His blessed word. Give us the love to be of one mind and to serve one another in Christ, that we may not be afraid of that which is disagreeable, nor of the rage of the incendiary whose torch is almost extinguished. Dear Father, Thou wilt guard us that his craftiness may not take the place of our pure faith. Grant that our cross and sufferings may tend to a blessed and sure hope of the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ, for whom we daily wait. Amen.

138.

For Greater Spirituality

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith, strengthen Thou me. I am cold in love, warm me and make me fervent that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust Thee altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in Thee. In Thee I have sealed the treasure of all I have. I am poor, Thou art rich and didst come to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner, Thou are upright. With me there is abundance of sin, in Thee is the fulness of righteousness. Therefore I will remain with Thee of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give.

139.

For a Daily Increase in Faith

O God, what would we be, if Thou shouldst forsake us? What can we do, if Thou withdrawest Thy hand? What can we know, if Thou never enlightenest? How quickly the learned become babes; the prudent, simple; and the wise, fools! How terrible art Thou in all Thy works and judgments! Let us walk in the light while we have it, so that darkness may not overcome us. Many renounce their faith, and become careless and weary of Thy grace. Deceived by Satan into thinking, they know everything and have no need, they feel satisfied and thus become slothful and ungrateful, and are soon

corrupted. Therefore help us to remain in the ardor of faith that we may daily increase in it through Jesus Christ, our real and only Helper. Amen.

For Preservation From Apostacy and Impenitence.

140. O dreadful and severe Judge, how mysterious and very terrible are Thy judgments! How sure and safe did Pharaoh consider himself at all times before he perished in the Red Sea, so that even his sense of security was a real and stern judgment of God upon him. O God, so jealous art Thou of Thy word, that Thou hast permitted it to cost the blood of Thy beloved Son, and yet men smile to hear it condemned and persecuted. Heavenly Father, Thy judgments are right. Thou art my witness that I have fear and anxiety in my heart that if there will not soon be an end of such sacrilege, Thou wilt take away Thy word, and wilt send our nation such blindness, and so harden it, that I shudder to think of it. Lord, heavenly Father, if we cannot help falling into other sins, nevertheless, preserve us from apostacy. Keep us near and in Him whom Thou hast appointed Master over sin and innocence, that we may never deny Him nor lose sight of Him. Then surely, all sin, death and hell cannot harm us.

141.

Saved Only by Grace

Dear Lord God, I cannot count the sins that I have done and am still doing. I have forgotten most of them and no longer feel my guilt. Whatever is in me and in every power besides grace, is sin and condemned. Thus I must altogether despair of myself, my works, and my powers. I know not what else to do but to hope and pray for Thy mercy. As far as grace and faith control me I am devout through Christ, but where these fail, I know and confess that nothing good is left in me. No matter how long I may live, I shall never find it different. If I had the holiness of all monks, there were still nothing good in what I think, speak, live and do, without Thy divine grace and power. This is my joy and comfort which Thou dost gladly grant a poor sinner, that all my sins are forgiven out of pure grace.

142.

Before Confession and Absolution

Dear Lord God, I am as truly a sinner before Thee, as my conception, my birth, my nature, together with my thoughts, words, works, and my entire being, are sinful. I am a corrupt tree and by nature a child of sin and wrath. As long as this nature remains with us we are sinners, and must say: Forgive us our debts. Thus I confess what Thou commandest, in order that Thou mayest be just, when

Thou judgest. Lord, I am an evil doer and a sinner against Thy divine commandment. Help Thou me for I am helpless.

143.

For Triumph Over Sin

O Lord, I am Thy clay, Thou art my potter and master workman. Because Thou declarest me a sinner, I accept Thy word. I sincerely acknowledge and confess the godless condition which manifests itself in my flesh and my entire nature, in order that Thou mayest be glorified, and I humiliated. I, with all other men, am sin and death; Thou art life and righteousness. I, together with all men, am the worst evil; Thou art and remainest the highest good. I acknowledge and confess all this. To this confession I am led, not by my reason which would rather cover and disguise this godless condition, but through Thy law and promises. I would have Thine honor remain and increase. Lord, I am Thy sin; Thou art my righteousness. Therefore I am happy and triumph without fear, for my sin cannot outweigh nor overpower Thy righteousness. Neither will Thy righteousness permit me to be or remain a sinner. Thy Spirit, O Lord, must make and keep me alive. Blessed art Thou, O faithful God, my merciful Redeemer. In Thee alone do I trust, therefore, I shall not be confounded.

Luther's Daily Confession Before Going to Sleep.

144.

Before Retiring

My dear Father, I always confess, and Thou seest that on my account as I walk or stand, every particle of my inner and outer being, together with my body and soul, are deserving of hell fire. Taking it all in all, Thou my Father, indeed knowest that of my own accord, there is not even a hair on my head, nor any other thing in me, that is good. Everything that belongs to me is a prey to the hateful devil and the bottomless pit. Why should I say much about it? In spite of this, be I what I may, I continue to pray to Thee, my dear Father. I would not have Thee to fix Thine eyes upon me to search me, lest I must be lost and destroyed, even if a hundred thousand worlds were mine! But I pray Thee to look upon the face of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, Thine Annointed, my Mediator, High Priest and Advocate; my Saviour, Redeemer and Benefactor. O my Father be gracious and merciful on His behalf, not mine. Grant me a happy end and a joyful resurrection, for the sake of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ. Help my body in this world and my soul in the world to come. For the sake of the crimson blood which He has shed on the cross for the forgiveness of my sins, and on account of my many sins which cannot be named,

and which out of respect to Thy righteousness, Thou wilt not cover, I pray Thee now, my Father, in accordance with Thine infinite mercy, permit the blood of Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, to accomplish in me its purpose and fruition. It was ordained by Thee from eternity that Thou wouldst permit the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross to suffice for the forgiveness and remission of my sins. Hence at whatever hour or moment by day or night, Thou wilt come and knock, and wilt require my spirit which Thou hast breathed into me, I pray Thee continually, dear Father, to permit this spirit which is my soul, to be commended into Thy hands, for the sake of the blood, the sufferings, and death of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

After this Doctor Luther would speak briefly in the following manner:

145. *Consecration*

O Jesus Christ, I live to Thee; I die to Thee; living or dying, I am Thine. (Rom. 14:7).

a. Verily, verily, if a man keep My saying (which means, if he firmly believes in his heart that with My sufferings and death, and with My crimson blood shed on the tree of the cross, I have submerged, drowned, strangled and destroyed his sins), he shall never see death. (John 8:51). Whether I am asleep or awake, eat or drink, stand or move, I continually await the sound of the last trump, when the dead who have fallen asleep in Jesus will come forth from the graves, and everyone will receive his reward from the Judge whom no one can deceive.

146. Dear God, in Thy presence I confess myself a great sinner. The Ten Commandments would drive and cast me directly into hell. But Thy precious gospel teaches me that it is the highest wisdom to know and believe that out of love Thou hast established a kingdom, through Christ, in which Thou wilt be merciful, and wilt help poor and condemned sinners. Therefore I speak my confession of faith and sin in one word: I am indeed a sinner, but God is merciful to me. I am Thine enemy, but Thou art my friend. Justly I would be condemned, yet I know that Thou dost not want to condemn me, but wouldst have me blessed and an heir of heaven. Indeed this is Thy will. Thou hast permitted this truth to be preached to me and hast commanded me to believe it, for the sake of Thy Son whom Thou hast given for me. Amen.

147. *For Help to Flee From Sin*

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I feel my sins. They bite, and gnaw, and terrify me. Whither shall I go? I look to Thee, Lord Jesus, and believe in Thee. Although my faith is weak, I cling to Thee and am assured, for Thou hast promised: He that believeth in Me shall have everlasting life. Even if my conscience is burdened and my sins frighten me, and make me tremble, Thou hast nevertheless said: My son

be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee, I will raise thee up at the last day, and thou shalt have eternal life. I cannot help myself by any means of mine. I come to Thee for help.

148.

Waiting to Be Found by the Good Shepherd

O God, these are Thy words: There is greater joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, than over ninety-nine which need no repentance. All the righteous and the angels shall crush sin under their feet and cover it. Now, O my God, I who feel my sins, am here and judged already. I am sorely in need of a shepherd to seek me, wherefore I rely altogether on the gospel. O Lord, I know that Thou dost make known, and I want to cling to this assurance, that I am the straying sheep, and Thou art the Shepherd and the One who seeks the lost. In the mirror of Thy law, I see that I am a ruined and lost sinner. Save me, O God, for the sake of Thine only begotten Son. Amen.

149.

For Comfort to Timid Consciences

O gracious Saviour, how wisely Thou hast provided. I know that Thou art my brother, for it is written in the Psalms: I will declare Thy name to my brethren. My Lord Jesus Christ, although Thou art both God and King of heaven and earth, I need not be afraid of Thee. Thou art my companion, my brother, my flesh and blood. I will not despair because I am a sinner,

and Thou art holy. If I had not been a sinner, Thou wouldest not have suffered for me. Wherefore, I am comforted. As amongst Thine ancestors of whom it was Thy will to be born, there were both good and evil, so we stand in Thy presence in order that Thou mightest comfort our fearful and timid consciences, and we may trust anew in Thee, knowing that Thou hast also taken away our sin. Thou indeed hast taken it away, and hast left us the word which assures us of it. To Thee be praise in eternity. Amen.

For the Right Faith and Its Strengthening Power.

150. Almighty God, who through the death of Thy Son hast destroyed sin and death, and through His resurrection hast restored innocence and eternal life, that being delivered from the power of the devil, we may live in Thy kingdom; grant us grace that we may believe this with our whole heart. Enable us at all times, steadfastly to praise and thank Thee in this faith, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

151. *For an Increase of Faith*

O Lord, increase in us the faith. Gladly and truly indeed would I deem Thee my dearly beloved Father, and Christ my brother, but alas, my flesh will not follow. Therefore, help my unbelief, that I may accept Thy word as truth, and glorify Thy Name. O

Lord, turn our captivity. Redeem us who are the first born of Thy new creation, in order that as redemption through Christ has been perfectly and sufficiently accomplished, we may likewise fully and truly know and accept it. As by Thy mighty hand the sea was dried up by a parching wind, so let everything that remains of our bondage vanish. Amen.

152.

For a Clean Heart and a Firm Faith

I thank Thee, my dear God, that I have learned not to begin faith by my own efforts, nor attempt to destroy my sin with my repentance. I might do this before men, and it would pass before the world and its judges; but with Thee, O God, there is an eternal wrath which I cannot satisfy, and before which I would have to despair. Therefore I thank Thee that Another has seized and born my sins, and has made atonement for them. With joy I would believe this. It appears so truly right and comforting to me. But I cannot persuade myself to believe it, and I find no power in me that enables me to convince myself. I cannot comprehend it as I ought. Lord, lead Thou me. Help me and give me the power and gift to believe. I plead as David did: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. I am unable to create a new and clean heart: it is Thy work and creation. Just as I cannot create the sun and moon and

make them rise and shine brightly in the heavens, so little can I make the heart clean and provide myself with a right spirit, a strong and firm frame of mind that is unbending and will not waver, neither doubt nor mistrust Thy word. Help us daily to increase in faith. And though the world should fall and everyone should conspire against us and the devil were to destroy every creature, grant that I shall not be moved, but by Thy divine help remain in the gospel. Amen.

153.

A Straying Soul longing for the Good Shepherd

My Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art indeed the only Shepherd, and I, alas, am the lost and straying sheep. I have fear and anxiety. Gladly would I be devout, own Thee, my gracious God, and have peace in my heart. I learn that Thou art as anxious for me as I am for Thee. I am very eager to know how I can come to Thee to be helped. And Thou art in anxiety and care and desirest nothing else so much as to bring me back to Thee again. Then come to me. Seek and find me. Help me also to come to Thee and praise and honor Thee forever. Amen.

154.

For Acceptance of Privileges Secured by Christ

O merciful God, what a kind and gracious Father Thou art, who dealest so sincerely and paternally with us poor and condemned sinners. Thou didst cast Thine only Son, Jesus Christ, Thy most precious possession, into the jaws of death and the devil,

and didst require that He should descend into the deep that He might again ascend on high and lead captive the captivity which has held us all in bondage. Through this we are Thy dear children, and His brethren and co-heirs of all His eternal, heavenly blessings. Give us Thy Holy Spirit that He may preserve us in the faith to our end. And grant Thy grace that the youth and those who are yet to be born; and the weak in the faith, and those not yet properly instructed, may get and keep a right understanding of the doctrine that they also are privileged to become fellow citizens with the angels, as we are who believe in Christ.

For Comfort From the Sacraments.

155. *Thanks for Baptism*

I thank, praise and glorify Thee, my Lord Christ, with heart and voice before the world, that Thou art merciful to me, and dost help me. For thus have I received it in baptism, that Thou, and none other, shalt be my Lord and God.

156. *Prayer for a Child to Be Baptized*

Dear God, Thou wilt not only deliver this child from the power of the devil, but wilt also strengthen it that it may boldly withstand him in life and in death.

157. *Before Communion*

My Lord Christ, I have fallen. I would gladly be strong. For this purpose Thou hast instituted the sacrament, that with it we may rekindle and

strengthen our faith, and thus be helped. Therefore I am here to receive it. Behold Lord, here is Thy word. My infirmities and shortcomings are known to Thee. Thou Thyself hast said: Come unto me all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give thee rest. I now come to be helped.

158. *While Communing*

Lord, it is true that I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof. Yet I am in need and desirous of Thy help and grace. Thus I come with no other plea, than that I have heard the gracious words of invitation to come to Thine altar. Thou hast assured me, who am unworthy, that I shall have forgiveness of all sins through Thy body and blood which I eat and drink in this sacrament. Amen, dear Lord, Thy word is true. I do not doubt it. Thus I eat and drink with Thee. Be it unto me according to Thy word.

159. *After Communion*

We thank Thee, Almighty Lord God, that Thou hast refreshed us with this salutary gift, and we beseech Thy mercy that Thou wilt let it nurture in us a strong faith toward Thee and fervent love amongst us all, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord. Amen.

160. *For a Better Life Resulting From Communion*

Lord, Jesus Christ, I partake of Thy Supper, and yet I continue without fruit, as I have been before. I lament before Thee that I have received this great treasure to let it lie dormant within me. Since Thou hast given this blessing to me, grant also that it may so change my life that I will bring forth fruit that manifests itself in kindness to my fellowmen. Help us by Thy Holy Spirit to thank Thee from the heart for this sacrament, and to use it worthily to our salvation. Amen.

161. *Thanks for Benefits Derived From the Sacraments*

O my God, though I be a sinner, yet I am not a sinner. On my own account and apart from Christ, I am a sinner. But in my Lord Jesus Christ, and apart from me, I am no sinner. I firmly believe that He has destroyed all my sins with His precious blood. For a token of this I am baptized, cleansed by God's word, and declared absolved and free from all my sins. In the sacrament of the true body and blood of my Lord Jesus Christ, I have received as a sure sign of grace the forgiveness of sins which he has merited, won and accomplished for me by the shedding of His precious blood. For this I thank Him in eternity. Amen.

For Protection and Extension of the Kingdom of God.

162.

For Preservation of the Church

O Lord, although Thou art justly angry with us on account of our sins, Thou hast never yet deserted the human race altogether. From amongst men who have looked to Thee for all blessings and comfort, Thou hast always preserved a Church for Thyself, whose habitation and refuge Thou hast ever been. Dear God, keep us and Thy little flock, that we may escape the bitter wrath, and be found amongst those who honor and serve the humble Christ, and gladly await the judgment with the blessed, at His right hand. Amen.

163.

For Devout Teachers of the Pure Gospel

Dear Lord God, bring and give blessedness and salvation to the holy Church which is the kingdom of Christ. Send us devout and God-fearing teachers who shall reveal Thy Name to the world, and proclaim that Thou art gracious and merciful, and dost forgive us our sins for the sake of Thy Son, and wilt grant us eternal life in order that all people may rely on Thy grace and mercy, call upon Thee, and give praise and thanks to Thee. Abolish all doctrines of men, and let Christ alone be our King who shall rule through His gospel, and make us His servants. (John 2:15). Amen.

164.

For Protection of the Church

Almighty and everlasting Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we see and feel how Thy Church fares in this world, what its lot is, and how it is annoyed in so many ways by the world and the devil. Wherefore, we pray Thee for the sake of Thine only begotten Son, first, to comfort and strengthen our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not be overwhelmed by so many dangers. Again, we pray Thee that Thou wilt not only hinder the purposes and plans of the enemies, but with Thy true and marvelous help prove to the whole world that Thou carest for the Church, and also dost rule, protect, and deliver it, who livest and reignest eternal God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen.

165.

For Extension of the Church

Dear God, we are indeed tortured by sin and surrounded by death. We have become the shameful images of the devil. Restore again to us Thy work which is righteous and lifegiving. Deliver us from the works of the devil, whereby he has cast us from life into death. Dear Son of God, Jesus Christ, Thou didst come to earth to destroy his works, and didst abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light. Give us Thy grace that we may continually extend Thy kingdom, and diminish and destroy the devil's king-

dom. Send laborers into Thy harvest together with the angels to take away the offences which at present are so numerous in Thy kingdom on earth.

166.

For the Lord to Assert Himself Against False Prophets

O Lord, Thou who art a God of vengeance, who alone dost recompense and punish all wickedness, break forth as the day. Reveal Thyself that everyone can see Thee. For tyrants and false prophets have come out into the open, have gained the upper hand, and exult in their triumph. But Thou remainest silent, and hidest Thyself, as though Thou wert buried and wouldst come no more, for Thou dost not resist and punish this wickedness. Therefore we beseech Thee again, break forth. Show Thy face. Let Thy countenance appear against the wicked. It belongs to Thee to avenge and punish. If it be possible that some who now persecute the Gospel may yet be converted, we heartily desire and pray for it. But if it be no longer possible, as it may now be feared, since we have so long and ardently admonished and pleaded with them, and they still willfully rave against the known truth, we commit them to Thy judgment, which is righteous. Amen.

V.

PRAYERS FOR A CHRISTIAN LIFE.

167. Dear God and Father, we thank Thee for thine infinite goodness and love to us. Thou dost continually keep us in the word, in faith, and in prayer, that we may know how to walk before Thee in humility and in fear, and that we may not pride ourselves on our own wisdom, righteousness, skill, and strength, but glory alone in Thy power who art strong when we are weak, and dost through us weaklings daily prevail and gain the victory. We pray Thee so to nurture us that we may please Thee like beautiful pleasure gardens in order that many people may enjoy our fruits and be attracted by us to all godliness. Write into our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit what is so abundantly found in Scripture, and let us constantly keep it in mind, and permit it to become far more precious to us than our own life, and whatever else we cherish on earth. Help us to live and act accordingly. To Thee be praise and thanks in eternity. Amen.

For Obedience and Patience.

168. Lord God, I have indeed transgressed Thy commandments. I have been impatient in reverses. I am unsympathetic and unmerciful. I fail to assist my neighbor. I realize that I am un-

able to resist sin. I cannot become weary of doing evil. Dear Lord, pour Thy grace within me, and give me Thy Holy Spirit so that I may be obedient to Thee, and keep each one of Thy commandments. Help me to be at enmity with the world, and to give my heart and soul to Thee. Amen.

169.

For Lasting Peace

Dear God, give us also peaceful hearts, and a right courage in the tumult and strife against the devil, that we may not only endure and finally triumph, but also have peace in the midst of the struggle, praise and thank Thee, and not complain nor become impatient against Thy Divine Will. Let peace win the victory in our hearts, that we may never through impatience undertake anything against Thee our God or our fellowmen, but remain both inwardly and outwardly quiet and peaceable toward God and man, until the final and eternal peace shall come. Amen.

170.

For the Redeemed and Reconciled to Please God

Lord, we have prayed for Thy work. In it we have no part, but we would have Thee to work, and us to receive from Thee Thy grace and blessing. For Thou dost manifest Thyself, and dost make us blessed only through Thy work accomplished in our redemption from the misery of sin and eternal death which Satan has brought through Adam upon all men. After this Thy work, we who are justified by it, fol-

low with our work in holiness and obedience to Thy word. This is acceptable and pleasing to Thee, and yet it comes from Thy grace and proceeds from Thy work. Our Lord and God, be Thou gracious to us that we who are reconciled to Thee through the death of Thy Son may please Thee. Amen.

For Brotherly Love.

171.

For Unceasing Love

Dear Father in heaven, grant us for the sake of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be true learners of Christ, and thereby acquire a heart in which there will be a never ceasing fountain of love. Amen.

172.

For Christ-Like Service to Neighbors

Lord, I fail in that Thou givest Thyself so richly and overflowingly to me, and I cannot do likewise to my neighbor. I lament this before Thee, and pray Thee to let me become so rich and strong that I can do to my neighbor as Thou doest to me.

Dear God, I have been wronged. What is it for? I do not deserve it of this person. But I must remember and consider How I stand with Thee. Here I find a long account against me which convinces me that I am ten times worse and have sinned a thousand times more against Thee, than my neighbor has done to me. Therefore it behooves me to comply with Thy wish, by sincerely praying: O Lord, forgive, and I will also forgive.

173.

For a more Charitable Feeling to One's Neighbor

My Lord Jesus, behold my neighbor has injured me a little, has slighted my honor with his speech, and has somewhat interfered with my rights. I cannot tolerate this, and so I wish he were out of my way. O God, hear my complaint that I cannot feel kindly toward him, however gladly I would. Behold how totally cold and insensible I am. O Lord, I am helpless and stand forsaken. If Thou wilt change me I shall be devout. Otherwise, I must remain as I have been before. O dear God, change me by Thy grace. Amen.

For Triumph Over All Difficulties.

174.

For Faith to Overcome Trials

O Father and God of all comfort, grant us through Thy word and Holy Spirit a firm, happy, and grateful faith whereby we may readily overcome this and every other trial, and at length realize that it is the truth when Thy dear Son Jesus Christ Himself says: Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

175.

For Pardon and Deliverance From Sin

O God, where is there another like unto Thee, who forgivest sins and dost remit iniquity to the residue of Thy people. Thou dost not keep Thine anger forever, for Thou art merciful and dost pardon our transgressions, and dost cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Do Thou forever continue Thy mercy upon us, that we may walk in the light of Thy word, and

escape every peril of Satan and the world, through Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Redeemer. Amen.

176. *In a Responsible Position*

Heavenly Father, Thou art indeed my Lord and God, who hast created me out of nothing and hast also redeemed me through Thy Son. Now Thou hast placed this responsibility upon me. Here my will is not respected, and there is so much that presses and worries me for which I can find neither help nor counsel of myself. Therefore let these cares be cast upon Thee. Grant me Thy help and counsel and be Thou all to me in this position.

In Sorrow.

177. *Submission to Suffering*

Dear God, I am Thy creature. Thou hast sent me a cross and suffering and sayest to me: Suffer a little for My sake and I will reward thee well. Dear God, because it is Thy will I shall gladly suffer.

178. *For Fatherly Chastisement*

Dear Father, Thou canst cheerfully smite and scourge, I, alas, have fully deserved it. Nevertheless, let it be a Father's rod, as Thou chastisest all Thy children whom Thou lovest. Those whom Thou dost not reprove for their sins are not children but bastards. Therefore, scourge and beat and correct us speedily, O righteous Judge. But, merciful Father, chastise us so as not to turn Thy Father's heart from us, that we may praise and glorify

Thee forever in this world and the next. Amen.

179.

For an End to Suffering

Dear God, Thou hast overwhelmed us with many adversities and hast enabled us clearly to see Thy wrath. Cease now to afflict us, dear God, for Thou hast mortified us long enough, and hast sufficiently pressed and burdened and humiliated us. Graciously turn to us again and assure us how gentle and merciful Thou art, that we may comfort and quiet our hearts in trouble. Amen.

180.

For Realization of the Purpose of Suffering

O Father of all mercy and God of all comfort, strengthen and uphold me by Thy Spirit, on Whom Thou dost command us to wait, until there shall appear the purpose of all our tribulations. For Thou dost not permit men to be tortured and grieved for Thy pleasure. Indeed Thou dost not permit any evil to be done, unless Thou canst make it serve a good purpose. Thou seest my distress and weakness, therefore, Thou wilt help and deliver me. Amen.

At the Diet in Worms, April 18, 1521.

181.

Under Great Pressure of Trials and Persecution

Almighty and eternal God, what a strange thing this world is! How it opens the mouths of the people! How small and insignificant is man's trust in Thee! How weak and tender is the flesh, and how powerful and busy is the devil aided by his apostles and the worldly wise! How soon the world

withdraws its hand, whirls around, pursues the common course, and speeds on the broad road to hell where the godless belong, and sees only what is brilliant and powerful, great, mighty and respected! If I should now turn mine eyes thither, I would be undone, for the bell is already cast, and the sentence is pronounced. O God, O God, O Thou my God, O Thou my God, stand Thou by me against the wisdom and reason of all the world. Do it. Thou alone must do it. It is indeed not my affair, but Thine. I have nothing to do with these great lords of the world for myself. I would rather have good and quiet days and be undisturbed. But it is Thy cause, O Lord, which is righteous and eternal. Stand by me, Thou true and eternal God. I rely on no man, for it were vain. All that is flesh and savors of the flesh halts. O God, O God, dost Thou not hear me, my God? Art Thou dead? No, Thou canst not die; Thou art only hiding Thyself. Hast Thou called me hitherto? I ask Thee in order that I may surely know. Ay, my God, grant it! For never in my life have I thought to oppose such great lords, and never have I purposed doing it. O God, stand by me in the name of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ who shall be my Protector and Defender, even my mighty Fortress through

the power and help of Thy Holy Spirit. Lord, where remainest Thou? Come, come, I am ready like a patient lamb to lay down my life for this cause. It is Thy cause and it is righteous. I will not separate myself from Thee forever. Be it resolved in Thy name, that the world cannot force me to act against my conscience, even if it had still more devils, and if my body which is first of all a creature of Thine, would have to perish meanwhile. But to this end Thy word and Spirit come to my rescue, even if it were only for the body. But the soul is also Thine. It belongs to Thee, and may it remain with Thee forever. Amen. So help me God. Amen.

Thanks for the Protection of the Angels.

182. Dear heavenly Father, I thank and praise Thee, because I, a poor being, though there were a hundred thousand like me, could not resist one devil, yet by the help of Thy holy angels I am able to withstand them all. And though I do not have a little drop of wisdom, and the wicked and deceptive enemy has an ocean full, yet he shall not know how, nor be able, to harm me. My merciful God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, I owe thanks to Thee alone for this blessing. For this is Thy glory that Thou dost manifest

Thine honor, wisdom and might in shame, and foolishness and weakness. Thou alone shalt have the honor of being a wise, mighty, and gracious God, when Thou dost enable us through Thy beloved angels to smite the devil. Dear God, help us to do this. Amen.

For the Holy Ministry.

183.

For Preservation Against Misleading Education

Dear Lord God, grant Thy grace that I may rightly understand Thy word, and far rather also do it. O most blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, behold if my quest after knowledge does not lead me to glorify Thee alone, let me rather not know a single letter, and give me only so much as I, a poor sinner, need to glorify Thee. Amen.

184.

Prayer of a Young Preacher

Dear God, I have begun to preach and to teach the people. It is a difficult task. If it offends here and there, may there be no harm done. Since Thou hast commanded me to preach Thy word, I will not cease to do so. If it fails, it fails for Thee. If it succeeds, it succeeds for Thee and me.

185.

For God's Counsel and Guidance

Thou seest how unworthy I am to fill so great and important an office. Were it not for Thy counsel, I would have utterly failed in it long ago. Therefore, I call upon Thee for guidance. Gladly indeed will I give my heart and voice to this service. I want to teach the people. I myself also want constantly to seek and study in

Thy word, and eagerly to meditate upon it. Use me as an instrument of Thine. Only, dear Lord, do not forsake me, for if I were alone, I would wantonly bring everything to naught.

186.

Relying Solely on God's Word

Dear heavenly Father, speak Thou. I will gladly remain silent, and be a child and learner. If I should rule the Church with my own knowledge, wisdom and understanding, it would long ago have foundered, and suffered shipwreck. Therefore, dear God, do Thou Thyself guide and direct it. I will gladly forego what I see and understand to let Thee rule alone through Thy word.

187.

Pastor Not an Object but a Guide to Worship

I do not worship my pastor, but he tells me of a Lord whose name is Christ, and makes Him known to me. I will be attentive to his words as long as he leads me to this Master and Teacher who is the Son of God.

188.

Giving God the Glory

Lord, what Thou doest not remains undone. If Thou wilt not help, I shall gladly come to naught. The cause is not mine. Therefore, I seek no glory in it. I will cheerfully be Thy mask if only Thou wilt strive.

189.

For Divine Help to Convince Hearers

O God, Thou seest that at times they ridicule, blaspheme and condemn me on account of Thy word. There is no one to praise me. Uphold Thou me, and prove that I teach the truth. Enable me, like Thy dear Son, to say to Thee:

Glorify me that I may also glorify Thee. Grant me Thy Spirit, do signs and wonders, in order that my teachings shall be confirmed. May I thus glorify Thee, and preach that Thou art my true God and Father. Then shall they believe me and be glorified with me.

For Those In Authority.

190.

For Orderliness Amongst Rulers

Dear Lord God, direct our ruler's heart to Thy praise and glory, and the welfare of the nation. Enlighten those who are in authority and move them to do what is right. Preserve Thy people, Thy judgment, Thy righteousness, and all administration of justice in this nation and throughout the world, so that good order may prevail, the universal peace may not be disturbed by rebellion and sedition, and that proper discipline and respect may not be disregarded nor violated by unchastity and other offences. Amen.

191.

For Uprightness and Usefulness of Rulers

O Father of all grace, preserve our ruler in the knowledge of Thee and of Thy pure word, as one in the midst of wolves, and himself surely not altogether free from dangerous influences, especially in these evil and perilous times. Guard him against all abuses of authority. Since much good can be done by him to many sad, forsaken, and erring souls, send Thy Spirit upon him, and make him an acceptable in-

strument to accomplish many great things to the praise and glory of Thy word. Amen.

Prayer of a Ruler.

192.

For a Successful Administration

O God, Creator and Ruler of all things, who lovest my soul, teach me how to protect the realm entrusted to me. Show me where I shall find help of Thee to preside faithfully and well over these people. I am ruling in the world as in a dark night and a thick mist, but Thou dwellest in the bright midday. O that I should also reign in the noontide of peace. Let me not become disheartened, nor sink down under great difficulties. Rule and guide Thou me. Grant that I may not rely on my own wisdom. Favor us with blessed progress, success, and a quiet and peaceable government.

193.

For Help to Rule After God's Plan

Help me, dear God, so to preside over my realm, that I may rule my land and people in accordance with Thy command, and to the maintenance of Thine honor.

194.

For Divine Aid to Disregard Self and to Consider the Common Welfare

My Lord and God, Thou knowest that I would rather be alone at home without a scepter, a crown, silver, gold or any pomp and show. But Thou wilt have me in this office, since Thou hast elevated me in preference to others. Therefore I submit to Thy will. Help me to rule not according to my desires

and pleasures, but for the promotion of the common welfare. Amen.

Prayer of a Soldier.

195.

Relying on God's Grace and Mercy

Dear God, Thou seest that I must go to war. I would indeed rather keep out of it. I do not rely on the righteous cause, but upon Thy grace and mercy. I will not war against Thee, neither will I be in an army that robs God of the things that are God's. But I shall be obedient and serve where Caesar may have the things that are Caesar's, and God the things that are God's.

O heavenly Father, here I am according to Thy will in this external work and service of my ruler, as I owe it first of all to Thee, and then to my ruler for Thy sake. I thank Thee for Thy grace and mercy that Thou hast placed me in this occupation, and that I am assured that it is not sinful but righteous, and that it is obedience agreeable to Thy will. But since I have learned through Thy gracious word that none of our good works can help us, and that no one is saved as a warrior, but only as a believing Christian, I will by no means rely on my obedience and work as a soldier, but sincerely do this as a service according to Thy Will. Enable me to believe from the heart that only the innocent blood of Thy dear Son, my

Lord Jesus Christ, which has been obediently shed for me in accordance with Thy gracious will, can redeem and save me. In this faith I will remain, wage war and do all things, and in it I shall die. Dear God and Father, preserve and strengthen this faith in me through Thy Holy Spirit. Amen. I commend my body and soul into Thy hands.

After this pray the Lord's prayer, and then cheerfully unsheath the sword and wield it in the name of God.

For the Family.

196.

Submitting to God's Ordinance

Dear God, I learn of Thee that marriage was instituted by Thee, and is pleasing to Thee. Therefore, I submit to Thy word. I shall be reconciled to whatever Thou wilt permit to come to me in this estate. Amen.

197.

For God's Guidance in Finding a Devout Husband or Wife

Dear God, since marriage was instituted by Thee, give me, Thy poor child, a devout wife (husband) so that I may live honestly and peaceably in true love, that my will may be hers (his), and again her (his) will mine. Choose for me one with whom I may serve Thee, and by faith and prayer overcome the trials of married life. Amen.

198. *For Help to Meet Parental Responsibilities*

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast opened mine eyes, that I may see how through Thy death, Thou hast redeemed me from sin, and through Thy resurrection hast made me an heir of heaven and eternal life. Now, dear Lord, I thank Thee for these great and unspeakable gifts, and will in turn gladly do what Thou dost require of me. Thou hast commanded me faithfully to serve my husband (wife), and diligently and submissively to bear the responsibilities of family life. I will gladly do this. Thou hast made me (father) mother of a family. Dear Lord, make me a devout parent. Help me to give my heart and soul to the discharge of my parental duties. I would rather lose my life than be disobedient to Thee by offending my children and servants or fail faithfully to govern them. Thou wilt not permit this Thine ordinance and blessing to be disturbed or destroyed, but wilt graciously protect it through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In Sickness of Children.

199. Dear Father, Thy rod is severe, but I am confident that Thou remainest a loving Father. Dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who hast been an example for all our sufferings, impress Thyself upon our hearts, and comfort us that we may bring to Thee the sac-

rifices of our sorrowing spirits, and with willing hearts entrust our child (as Abraham entrusted Isaac) to Thee. Amen.

200.

Requesting God to Become Head of the Family

Dear God, Thou hast given to me wife, child, house and land. I receive these at Thy behest, and will care for them for Thy sake. Therefore I will do as much as possible that all may go well. If not all my plans succeed, I will learn to be patient and let whatever cannot be changed take its course. If I fare well, I will give God the glory and say, O, Lord, it is not my work nor effort, but it is a gift and providence of Thine. Take my place and be Thou head of the family, and I will yield and be obedient to Thee in all humility. Amen.

Prayer of a Servant.

201.

Realizing That the Humblest Calling Is of God

Dear Lord God, I thank Thee that Thou hast directed me into this place and service in which I know I serve and please Thee more than all nuns and monks who have no commandment for their service. But I have God's precept in the Fourth Commandment that I shall honor father and mother, and serve master and mistress with all diligence and faithfulness, and shall assist them in keeping house. I will for their sakes gladly comply with these requirements, willingly do what I shall, to please my master and

mistress, and be and abandon what they desire. What harm is there, if I am occasionally rebuked, when I am assured that my occupation is an acceptable life and service to Thee. My Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ Himself, attended a marriage and graced it with His presence, and His service to His mother. Should not I also now gladly do and suffer something to the honor and service of this holy estate? I will not rebel against being a dog in Thy house in order that I may at least eat the crumbs that fall from the table. Thou owest me nothing at all, therefore, I depend on Thy grace and mercy. Amen.

For Every Need.

202. Dear Father, give us our daily bread, favorable seasons and health. Preserve us from war, pestilence and famine. If Thou wouldst tempt me a little by withholding Thy blessings for a while, Thy will be done. If my time and hour have come, deliver me from all evil; if not, give me strength and patience. Amen.

203. Lord, I know that I cannot produce nor preserve for myself a piece of daily bread, neither can I guard myself against any need or misfortune. Therefore I will pray as Thou biddest, and hope to receive as Thou dost promise, who takest my need to heart

and helpest before I think of asking. If it please Thee, be it done accordingly; if not, let it remain undone.

For the Precious Fruits of the Earth.

204.

For Protection and Right Use of the Harvest

Dear Lord, graciously protect the crops on the fields. Cleanse the air, give refreshing rain and favorable weather that there may be a good harvest. Preserve the fruits from being poisoned so that man and beast which eat and drink of them may be protected from pestilence, fever and other diseases. If Thou wouldst permit the evil spirits to contaminate the air and with it the fruits, corn and wine, men would have to eat and drink sickness and death with their own food. Therefore, dear God, let Thy gifts to us be blessed that they may be wholesome and delightful to us, and that we may not use them to the injury of the soul or the increase of sin, intemperance and idleness from which proceed unchastity, adultery, cursing, swearing, murder, war and every misery. But give us grace to use Thy gifts to our soul's salvation and the betterment of our lives, so that the fruits of the earth may serve to keep and improve the health of both body and soul.

To Invite God as a Guest.

205. *For the Best Use of Our Means*

O Lord, come to me and use of my bread, silver and gold. How well are they applied, if I spend them in Thy service.

Against Anxiety for the Body.

206. *The Lord Can and Will Provide*

Dear God, why should I be anxious and care for my body and its food? Whence dost Thou bring forth the grain on the field and all the fruits, since the world with all its wisdom and power is not able to bring forth a stalk, a leaflet or a flower? In Thee I have a Lord who can multiply one loaf as much as He pleases without the aid of a farmer, miller or baker. If Thou doest this daily, why should I worry or doubt whether Thou canst or wilt supply my bodily wants!

207. *I Shall Not Want*

Dear Lord, I know that Thou still ownest more, and hast greater abundance, that Thou hast given away. In Thee I shall not want. If it were necessary, the heavens indeed would have to pour down a supply of our needs. Thou wilt never fail me. In Thee I have every treasure. If I have Thee, I have all I want.

208. *For True Preaching and Right Living*

Almighty and everlasting God, we pray Thee in the name of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, first for the spiritual kingdom and the blessed Gospel ministry. Give us devout and faithful preachers who will bring forth the treasure of Thy divine word in its truth and purity. Graciously guard us against schisms and heresies. Look not upon our great ingratitude with which we have long ago deserved that Thou shouldst withdraw Thy word from us. Do not chastise us as severely as we have merited. Rather let other calamities befall us than deprive us of Thy precious word. Again we pray Thee to give us thankful hearts that we may love Thy holy word, prize it very highly, hear it with reverence, and improve our lives accordingly, so that we may not only rightly understand Thy word, but also meet its requirements by our deeds, live in accordance with it, and daily increase in faith and good works, that thereby Thy name may be hallowed, Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done. Amen.

209. *For Rulers*

Permit us to commend to Thee all rule and authority throughout all Christendom. Enlighten their hearts by Thy word and Thy Holy Spirit that Thy word and glory may be upheld

and not hindered by them, and that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life amongst them in all godliness and honesty.

210. *For Success Over Enemies*

Give, Thou, also success to our ruler over his enemies. Remember Thy grace and mercy, and preserve us from falling into the hands of any tyrant. Thou wilt also guard our ruler against the devil and the pope.

211. *For Good Government*

We pray Thee especially for the government under whose care and protection Thou hast placed us. Bless it with success and prosperity, that the word of God, decency and all honesty may be advanced, and all offence of which there is still so much may be prevented, and the common welfare may be properly and peaceably provided for, and we also may be obedient and devout.

212. *Commending all to the Lord*

Thou wilt also permit wife and child, together with the sick and all who are afflicted in body and soul to be commended to Thee. For these and all other needs, and for myself I pray the Lord's Prayer: Our Father, etc.

Every Prayer should be concluded with a hearty Amen.

213.

Dear God, I know that my prayer spoken to Thee in the name and the faith of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, is indeed pleasing to Thee and will most assuredly be heard. Amen. Amen.

VI.

PRAYERS FOR A BLESSED END.

214.

Humbly Submitting to God

My dearest God, if Thou wilt that this shall be the hour of death, let Thy will be done. Lord God, most precious to me, Thou knowest how gladly I would have shed my blood for the sake of Thy word, but I may not be worthy of this honor. Thy will be done. If Thou wilt have it thus, I shall gladly die. Only let Thy holy name be praised and glorified by my sufferings and death. If it were possible, dear God, I would live longer for the sake of Thy blessed and chosen people. But if the hour has come, then Thou who art Lord of life and death wilt do as it pleaseth Thee.

215.

For Confusion of God's Enemies

My dearest God, Thou hast led me to this cause. Thou knowest it is Thy word and truth. Do not exalt nor gladden Thine enemies to ask exultingly: Where is now their God? But glorify Thy name overagainst Thine enemies, and confuse those who oppose Thy blessed and wholesome word.

216.

For Comfort of Holy Spirit in the Hour of Death

My dearest Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast graciously granted me knowledge of Thy holy name. Thou knowest that I believe in Thee, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the only true God. Thou art our Mediator and Saviour who hast shed Thy precious blood for us sinners. Support me in this hour, and comfort me with Thy Holy Spirit. Thou knowest, Lord, that they are many whom Thou hast permitted to shed their blood for professing the Gospel. I hoped I should be likewise privileged to shed my blood for the sake of Thy holy name. But I am not worthy of it. Thy will be done.

217.

Accepting God's Gracious Invitation

Thou knowest, Lord, that the devil has in many ways withstood me and that he would have destroyed my body through tyrants, kings and princes, and my soul with his fiery darts and terrible temptations, but Thou hast wonderfully preserved me to this hour against all their rage and fury. Thou wilt further preserve me, dear Lord, if it be Thy will. Most precious God, Thou art indeed a God of the weak and sinful who feel their need and anxiety and heartily desire Thy grace, comfort and help, according to Thy word: Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden. Lord, I am in great trouble and distress. I come to Thee upon Thine invitation. Help me for Thy mercy and truth's sake. Amen.

218.

Asking for the Best Gift

O my dear Lord Jesus Christ who hast said: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. In accordance with this promise, give me, Lord, while I ask, neither gold nor silver, but a strong and firm faith. Let me find, while I seek, not the lusts and pleasures of the world, but comfort and refreshment through Thy blessed and healing word. Open to me, while I knock. I desire nothing that the world treasures, for by it I should not be uplifted a hair's breadth. But grant me Thy Holy Spirit, who enlightens my heart, and comforts and strengthens me in my cares and trials, and keeps me in the right faith and trust in Thy grace to the end. Amen.

219.

That all Divine Gifts be Used to Praise God

O most precious God and Father, Thou hast given me many valuable gifts, in preference to thousands of others. If it be Thy will, I would gladly use these gifts to serve Thy little flock. Let Thy divine and fatherly will be done, that Thy name be praised through me, whether I live or die. (July 6, 1527).

220.

Commending the Soul of God

O heavenly Father, who art God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, and the God of all comfort, I thank Thee that Thou hast revealed to me Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, in whom I believe; whom I have known and

preached; whom I have loved and praised; whom the miserable pope and all godless people blaspheme and persecute. I pray Thee, Lord Jesus, let my soul be commended to Thee. O heavenly Father, although I must be torn away from this body and must leave it, I know that I shall remain with Thee forever, and no one can pluck me from Thy hands.

221.

On Day of Luther's Death

Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, faithful God. (Feb. 18, 1546).

In Danger of Death.

He who would die happy must think and say as follows:

222.

Absolved and Freed From Sin

Merciful God, be gracious to me. I am a sinful being and deserve nothing but Thy displeasure. But regardless of my past life, I know without doubt that I am baptized and made a Christian for the forgiveness of sins; and that my Lord Christ was born, suffered, died, and rose for me; and gave His body and blood for the nourishment of the soul, and the strengthening of faith. Therefore, I am absolved and freed from my sins in the name and power of Christ.

a. Such a heart and faith can fare ill, and be lost, as little as God's word can fail, or be false. Of this I can assure you, for God himself is your security through His word.

223.

Blessed Assurance

Dear Lord, Thou knowest that I am a poor sinner, but Thou hast shown me that Thou wilt be gracious to me through Thy dear Son to forgive my sins, and not to remember Thy wrath and condemnation. Thou wouldst have me believe this without doubt. I rely on this assurance, and will gladly pass out of this life in it.

224.

The Only Safe Refuge

Lord, I know no one in heaven and on earth in whom I may have a safe refuge except in Thee through Jesus Christ. I must strip myself of all my friends, works and merits. Lord, I have no refuge but in Thy bosom, where Thy Son dwelleth. Without this hope, I would be lost.

225.

Relying on Christ's Merits While Dying

Dear Lord Christ, even if I do not fulfill Thy law, and still have sin, and am afraid of death and hell, I yet know from the Gospel that all Thy merits are mine by faith. I am sure of this for Thou canst not deceive me. Thou wilt surely keep Thy promise. As a pledge of this I have received baptism, and on it I rely. Since Thou, dear Lord, art mine, I will gladly die, if it please Thee, dear Father. Death cannot harm me for it is swallowed up in victory. Praise be to Thee, Lord God, who hast given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

226.

Trusting in God for Deliverance

O Lord God, I am weak and fearful. I flee evil and do all I can to guard myself against it. Nevertheless, I am in Thy hands in this and every other evil that may overtake me. My flight is not sufficient since evil and misery are everywhere. The devil who is a murderer from the beginning and always seeks to bring about misery, never rests nor sleeps. Now Thou hast confined me to this place. Thy will be done, for I am Thy poor creature. Thou art able to deliver me in this extremity as easily as though I were endangered by fire, water, thirst, or any other peril.

Last Testament.

227.

A Dying Father Commending His Family to God

My dearest God, I thank Thee from the heart that Thou hast willed that I should be poor while on earth. On this account I can neither leave houses and lands, nor money and goods to my wife and children. As Thou hast given them to me, I give them again to Thee, Thou rich and faithful God. O Father of the orphans, and Judge of the widows, support, teach and keep them as Thou hast hitherto supported me. Amen.

228.

Comforting Assurances of Baptism in Passing Out of This Life

Dear Lord, I know, when I have done my best, I have still lived a blameable life. But I am comforted because Thou hast died for me, and hast sprinkled me with the blood from Thy holy wounds. For I am indeed baptized in Thee, and have heard the word through which Thou hast called me, commanded me to believe, and assured me of grace and life. With these blessings I will gladly go hence, not in anxious and hesitating doubts and fears which ask: Who knows what judgment God in heaven will pass on me? For I now live in the assurance of the gracious decree which God has given from heaven over and against the curse of the law: He who believes in the Son of God has eternal life. Amen.

For the Blessed Last Day.

229.

For Final Redemption and Glory

Lord Jesus Christ, haste and delay not, to bring the blessed day in which the hope of our joyous redemption shall be fulfilled. On this account Thou hast bidden us to pray: Thy kingdom come. Since Thou hast commanded us to pray thus, grant us grace and help that we may pray diligently, and at the same time firmly believe that we shall finally come to such glory. Continually mortify this old body that we at length receive a new body which is not so full of sin nor

inclined to all manner of evil as this body in which we now live. Give us bodies that will not become sick, nor suffer persecutions, nor die; but are redeemed from all temporal and spiritual misery, and like unto Thine own glorified body, dear Lord Jesus Christ. Grant also that the glad and blessed day of our redemption and glorification may soon come, and that we may realize it, as we now hear and believe it in Thy word. Amen.

230.

For Preparation to Await Christ's Coming With Joy

Dear Lord, quicken us that we may be prepared, when Thy Son cometh, to receive Him with joy, and serve Him with a pure heart. Graciously hasten that day. Bless and prepare us with wisdom and strength that we may in the meantime walk wisely and uprightly, and joyfully await the coming of Thy dear Son, and depart in blessedness from this vale of misery. Amen.

231.

For Restoration of What the Devil Has Attempted to Destroy

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel suffers; Thy name is profaned; Christians are persecuted and murdered; the right doctrine is suppressed; and the devil's rule with all wickedness is spreading, and all the blessed departed Christians and saints that lie forgotten in the earth, have returned to dust and ashes. Come then, and show forth Thy glory in Thyself and in Thy Church. Avenge Thy Name and the blood of martyrs, and bring them again to their glory. Amen.

232. *For an End of all Misery*

O Lord Jesus Christ, will not this misery finally come to an end, and the glory of the children of God soon begin? Thou hast promised the day in which Thou wilt deliver us from all manner of evil; let it come, even in this hour, if it be Thy will, and make an end of all misery. Amen.

Every Prayer is made to the Father, in the Name of Jesus, and by the help of the Holy Spirit. To make such prayer as effective as possible, Luther's hints scattered through this booklet will be very helpful.

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Luther prefaces every part of the Small Catechism with the words: In the plain form in which it is to be taught by the head of a family. Accord-

ing to this instruction the Small Catechism may be profitably used in connection with Luther's Prayers as a guide to Family worship. Luther prayed until he had the Catechism, and then he studied and prayed the Catechism every day as long as he lived. Thus the underlying spiritual meaning of the Catechism can be more easily fathomed by Luther's prayers than by the very best of the countless books that have been written on it.

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Some of the prayers in this book are found amongst the Collects for the Church Year. In the following index it will be seen that it is possible to select from Luther's Prayers one adapted to each Gospel Lesson of the Church Year. The same could be done with the Epistle Lessons.

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